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*The Sacred Books of
the Old Testament*

BY EDWIN WILLIAMS, M.A.

TREFECCA



109 e 60.

THE SACRED BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The Daviez Lecture of 1898.

THE SACRED BOOKS
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
BOTH HUMAN AND DIVINE.

A STUDY IN HIGHER CRITICISM.

BY
EDWIN WILLIAMS, M.A.,
TREFECCA COLLEGE.



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D. O'BRIEN OWEN.

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REV. D. O'BRIEN OWEN,

CARNARVON, N.W.



EXTRACT FROM THE TRUST DEED OF THE
" DAVIES LECTURE."

THOMAS DAVIES, of Bootle, near Liverpool, being deeply interested in the success and prosperity of the religious denomination known as

THE WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODISTS,

and being actuated by a desire to perpetuate the memory of his late father,

DAVID DAVIES,

who was for many years a faithful and consistent member of the said denomination, lately resolved to found and endow a Lectureship, to be called

THE DAVIES LECTURE

in connection with the said denomination ; and for that purpose, in June, 1893, paid to Trustees, appointed by the General Assembly, the sum of £2000, to produce annually the sum of £50.

The Lecturer shall be a fully ordained Minister of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.

The subject of the Lecture shall be RELIGION.

The Lecturer shall be allowed considerable latitude in the treatment of his subject. While special attention should be given to the Christian Religion, it is not intended to exclude the subject of other religions.

Such topics as the following may be taken up by the successive Lecturers :—

The Definition of Religion.

The Origin, Growth, and Development, together with the Universality of Religion.

The Philosophy of Religion.

The Science of Comparative Religion.

The Jewish Religion in its various Stages.

The Christian Religion in its Developments and Corruptions, in its Doctrines and Practices.

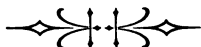
The Relation of Science to Religion.

The Relation of Morality to Religion.

All topics fairly connected with Religion in any of its aspects, whether Theological, Philosophical, or Historical.

The Lecture shall be delivered in each year during the sittings of the General Assembly of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, at one of their chapels in the place or town where such sittings shall be held, and on some evening before the day devoted by the said Assembly to preaching; and the Moderator of the Assembly, or, in his absence, the Acting Moderator, shall preside at the meeting at which the Lecture shall be delivered.

Each Lecturer must, within twelve calendar months after delivering his Lecture, publish at his own expense, in crown 8vo, the Lecture to take not less than 150 pages; and to be preceded by extracts from this Deed, explaining the foundation and purpose of the Lecture.



P R E F A C E .

THE present volume—an enlargement of the Lecture delivered at the General Assembly held at Newport, Mon., in 1898—is entitled “A STUDY IN HIGHER CRITICISM.” This indicates at once its purpose and its limitations. It does not profess to discuss fully this great subject, but to deal with only a portion of a field rich in many studies. Conscious that vague and incorrect ideas prevail concerning this important question, it was felt that an opportunity offered itself to present some broad outlines of its real character, and to indicate some salient points both for and against the newer methods. It is a study of methods rather than of results. Hence the discussion affects principles and does not enter into minute details. It is intended to stimulate study and to find in research the remedy for both panic and indifference. All the positions, or indeed the most important, have not yet been established, but still await further discussion. Uncertainty on important questions seems to form part of the discipline of our age, and to afford an opportunity for the exercise of patience, both in personal investigation and in attitude towards the conclusions of others. Precipitate judgment has never furthered the cause of Truth, nor has exercise of authority been able to stifle the pursuit of it. The recent declaration of the learned Prof. Harnack exhibits

the reactionary conservative tendency of present New Testament Criticism. This is the result of unwearied and untrammelled research. THE LORD reigneth, and His Truth must prevail. Undue fear for the safety of His Word may prove want of true reverence and faith.

Reverent and diligent study will assuredly prove the best for the present and for all crises. No conviction can be more necessary now, and at all times, than to realize that God is and ever has been with men. The lessons of the Divine Word are for the day, and have a message ever applicable.

The pressure of other and varied duties has interfered much with the preparation of this Lecture, and the writer is fully conscious that many defects mar his work. One fault, however, he hopes may be found entirely wanting, viz., unfairness and misrepresentation. Should this volume contribute in any degree to a better acquaintance and keener appreciation of the Divine Word, and lead to deeper sympathy *with all efforts in pursuit of the Truth*, he will have reaped abundant reward.

“THY WORD IS TRUTH.”



WORKS REFERRED TO.

-
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 B.D. . . . *Dictionary of the Bible*, by Dr. Hastings.
 Vols. i. and ii.
 CHEYNE . . . (1) *Founders of Criticism*; (2) *Hallowing of Criticism* (H. C.); (3) *Jeremiah*; (4) *Jewish Religious Life after the Exile* (J. R. L.).
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 WELLHAUSEN, JULIUS *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (1885), with *Preface by W. Robertson Smith* (We.).

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

B.C.

1320 The Exodus from Egypt.

1280 Israel enter Canaan.

1250 Song of Deborah.

1000 (?) Rise of Monarchy in Israel.

940 Disruption of the Kingdom under Rehoboam.

| <i>Judah.</i> | | | <i>Israel.</i> | |
|---------------|--|----------|------------------------------------|---------|
| 876 | | | Ahab. Revolt of Mesha | ELIJAH. |
| 783 | | | Jeroboam II. | AMOS. |
| 779 | Uzziah. | | | |
| 740 | Jotham. | ISAIAH. | 743-736, several successive Rulers | |
| 736 | Ahaz. | " | Pekah. | |
| 734 | " | " | First deportation of Israel. | |
| 730 | " | " | Hoshea. | |
| 727 | Hezekiah. | " MICAH. | | |
| 722 | | " | Fall of Samaria. | |
| 696 | Manasseh. | | | |
| 641 | Amon. | | | |
| 639 | Josiah. | | | |
| 626 | JEREMIAH'S Call. | | | |
| 621 | Deuteronomy discovered in the Temple. | | | |
| 586 | Captivity. | EZEKIEL. | | |
| 538 | First Return of Jews under Zerubbabel. | | | |
| 458 | Second Return under Ezra. | | | |

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INTRODUCTORY.

"We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

PAUL.

"The way of truth is one. But into it, as into a perennial river, streams flow from all sides."

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

"When God speaks and acts, we call it revelation. If there is an actual revelation, it must be, according to the true idea of it, supernatural, miraculous."

AUBERLEN.

"If now Livy and Dionysius and Polybius and Tacitus are treated so frankly and nobly by us that we do not put them to the rack for every syllable, why not also Matthew and Mark and Luke and John?"

LESSING.

INTRODUCTORY.

A STUDY in higher criticism requires no apology in the present day, and especially so in a Lecture, which, according to the terms of the Trust, may deal with "the Jewish religion in its various stages." The literature of that religion has influenced the world as no other has ever done, pervading not only the moral and spiritual, but also the literary and intellectual atmospheres. Consequently the Bible offers a study of many-sided interest. One of the chief characteristics of the present age is its awakened interest in the study of the Old Testament, and its readiness to avail itself of the singular advantages for the prosecution of such a study. Possibly its greatest peril is the want of recognizing the manifold character of the Hebrew Scriptures, issuing in a *onesided* and prejudiced treatment of a *manysided* book. It cannot be concealed, however, that this revived interest is associated with the dissemination of certain views concerning the structure of the Old Testament books, which are subversive of theories hitherto prevailing. It is equally evident also, that these views are no longer confined to the specialist, or the theological student, but have been popularized by various means so as to win widespread acceptance. A remarkable feature is the silent permeation of society by these modern theories, and the quiet, almost unconscious hold

they have taken, in a more or less modified form, of the present generation. This constitutes one point of difference between the New Testament controversy of the earlier part of this century and the Old Testament discussions of the latter part—the widespread tacit acceptance of the critical results in the latter. W. R. S. maintains that “it is the growing conviction of an overwhelming weight of the most earnest and sober scholarship.” This very acceptance makes it imperative to insist on the necessity of a critical attitude towards criticism. The new theory has submitted the older to rigorous investigation, and proclaimed it, when weighed in the balances, to be found wanting. A docile admission of such a verdict, without careful examination, is certainly most reprehensible.

Where acceptance has not been accorded, these newer theories are regarded with grave alarm. Imagining that the foundations of the citadel of the faith are being undermined, when the traditional views are rudely disturbed by the modern spirit, such minds are overwhelmed with anxiety and distress. The lance of criticism seems to pierce the heart of the Bible, and that has been flung, not by the hand of a foe, but of those professing reverence, love, and obligation.

To a third class, however, these modern methods are of singular interest. This is not possessed by the Athenian spirit, having “leisure for nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing ;” nor is it, on the other hand, timid and fearful of the new simply as such. Consciously or unconsciously, they have felt the influence of the spirit of the age. That great mental activity which marks our day, investigating the secrets of nature, and

tracing the operations of the great laws, which prevail in creation and also in human history, has caught them in its sweep, and issued in a widening of their views. The history of possibly the majority of Biblical students has been an imperceptible gliding from old moorings. Especially may this be recognized in the manifest effort to give greater prominence to the *human* element in the *Divine* word, and to estimate how far the one has affected the other. It is not any objection to the supernatural, but simply the recognition that, in revealing Himself to man, God comes to him on human lines, and manifests in revelation the same methods as in nature and in history. To such the present crisis is of supreme interest.

Such conditions are necessarily disturbing. Each age is called upon to grapple with difficulties peculiar to itself—problems born of its own spirit, and by dint of struggle and endurance alone can it appropriate its own characteristic inheritance of Divine truth. “Gain through apparent loss; victory through momentary defeat; the energy of a new life through pangs of travail; such has ever been the law of spiritual progress” (Westcott). The recognition of that law, so described by that acute and penetrating mind, may tend to arrest the steps of unnecessary panic in the present juncture. Upon England, already deeply agitated by the issue of the *Essays and Reviews* in 1860, the publication of the earlier portions of Colenso’s *Pentateuch* in 1862, fell as a thunderbolt, creating widespread dismay. Prof. Tholuck, of Halle, is said, though differing widely from the bishop, to have declared his conviction, that that work would prove itself of real blessing to England. Nothing less startling

would suffice to stir up the religious public of England to the importance of thorough Biblical research. In 1835, Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, had longed for "some beginnings of Biblical criticism, which, as far as relates to the Old Testament, is in England almost non-existent" (Letter xc.). In 1862 appeared the *Introduction to the Old Testament* of Dr. Samuel Davidson, the lectures of Dean Stanley on the Jewish Church, and Dr. W. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*. The article of Prof. W. R. Smith in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (vol. iii., 1875), on the BIBLE brought the results of criticism into greater prominence, and dated an epoch in England. No longer does the complaint of Dr. Arnold hold good, as witnesses the issue of seven editions of Dr. Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (1891-8); whereas the circulation of fourteen editions of *Lux Mundi* (1889-95), together with a multiplicity of varied literature on the Hebrew Scriptures, renders it impossible to-day to use the words of Dr. Dale in 1890—"that there is something very remarkable in the indifference, with which, at the present time, the majority of Christian people regard the whole critical controversy concerning the Old Testament." The origin and progress of higher criticism are the fruit of the spirit of the age—the necessary result of the advance of science; and on the age devolves the duty of facing with courage and fairness the difficulties falling to its lot.

The question of the composition of the Old Testament is of the first magnitude—the greatest possibly which has faced the church. And singularly enough not only the Christian, but also the Jewish Church is deeply engaged

in the discussion. This means far more to the Jew than to the Christian. The latter has also his New Testament; but to the Jew the Old is his sole Scripture, his inheritance from the past, and the support of his religious life. The Tübingen criticism, which in the first half of this century so violently agitated the Christian Church, imperilling its gospels, did not at all affect the Jew. This however touches Judaism deeply, and concerns its foundations and very existence. Yet such is the cogency of the critical studies to some of the learned Jews, that the fullest results of modern inquiry are accepted without hesitation. (Note I.)

To the Christian also the discussion concerns matters of supreme importance. The relation between the two Testaments is too close and intimate for the one to stand unimperilled, if the other be overthrown. The Christian religion sprang out from the bosom of the Old Testament Church, which ever looked forward to it as its crown and consummation. For the exposition of the New Testament a knowledge of the Old is a necessity, and its value is everywhere admitted in the New. The voice of the same God speaks in both and also in continuity. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in *his* Son" (Heb. i. 1, 2, R.V.). "It is not simply that the author of the earlier revelation is affirmed to have been also the author of the later, but the earlier revelation is treated as the preparation for the foundation of the latter" (Westcott). The Hebrew Scriptures formed the Bible of the church of the apostolic age, and on them the spiritual life even of our gracious

Lord Himself was nourished (cf. 2 Tim. iii. 15). Its ideas and words moulded the thought and language of the church to such a degree, that the closest relations of interdependence exist between the two Testaments. Hence the Christian Church has throughout the centuries recognized its value for the edification of its members.

Moreover these studies have engaged not only the Jewish Church, or the Protestant section of the Christian Church, but even the Roman, for from that communion have arisen some of the pioneers of the new criticism. To ignore the results of criticism is clearly therefore impossible, both because of its widespread acceptance and of the weighty interests at stake. Further, its claims to offer solution of inconsistencies and contradictions, which are said to beset the older view, demand attention and scrutiny (Note II.) To ignore it would be fatal, because calculated to create distrust. Cheyne says correctly that "it is equally wrong to despise criticism, and to fear it." Fear is derogatory to Divine truth; contempt is unworthy and dangerous. A scientific age claims the right to use its scholarship for the elucidation of the Scriptures. Such, in brief, is the higher criticism. Its own attitude therefore to physical science in the past should, by the lessons of its mistakes and failures, guide the church to saner and more efficient methods in the present juncture. Safety as well as duty lies in intelligent appreciation of the momentous questions at issue. Not by dogmatism or persecution, not by sarcasm or innuendo, must the problem be faced, but by honest effort to fairly apprehend the methods and to estimate the results. Resistance with other weapons than those of truth is

doomed to certain failure. And never verily in the history of the church has there been devolved upon its leaders a more solemn responsibility, charged with such far-reaching results, than at present. "The loyalty to revelation, which animates our prejudice, does not justify it"—said the late Canon Liddon once of his own attitude to the new critical methods—adding that "The great Alexandrians, who baptised the Platonic philosophy, would have bidden us of to-day welcome, and christen the critical and scientific spirit." To condemn the modern study of the Hebrew Scriptures on *a priori* grounds cannot be of any real advantage. Driver complains that the opposition to that study "appears to rely upon rhetorical depreciation and invective;" and adds, that "It is difficult to understand what force such weapons can be supposed to possess. No serious issue has ever yet been decided by their aid; and the present one, it is certain, will form no exception to the rule" (Introd. xvii. p. note). That the advocates of the older views however possess no monopoly of the use of such ambiguous weapons may be clearly seen from the application by Wellhausen of Isaiah xli. 6f. to his opponents!

It is certainly one of the great difficulties, that the questions at issue are of such a character, that the simple discussion of them seems to some forbidden and to occasion distress. That uneasiness may be found to be largely due to either the vagueness, or the entire want, of knowledge about the actual methods of the critical school. Ellicott concedes that there are against the traditional view (Note III.) "objections which cannot be overlooked." The reality of the force of these objections,

emanating "from the critical investigations of some of the most acute and disciplined minds in Europe," alone explains the readiness of the reception accorded to the critical views. And so fully does the learned Bishop recognise the validity of certain results, that he abandons the Traditional in favour of a "Rectified" theory, which holds that Moses was the compiler, but not the author of the whole of the Pentateuch. Modern criticism therefore clearly demonstrates the necessity of modifying traditional views, and consequently demands from every candid student of the word of God the most careful consideration. Hence it is of primary importance to recognise, that the authority of the Scriptures, and their value to the Christian, are not indissolubly bound up with the traditional views, else the hand of scholarship may not touch the sacred writings. This is either to vilify the highest exercise of the powers of the human mind, or to depreciate the intrinsic vitality of the Scriptures. Nothing can so enrich the church as to estimate the methods and results of modern criticism faithfully and fearlessly. In a battle of scholarship, where criticism meets criticism, testing and contesting point after point, the church will find its reward in a clearer and firmer grasp of the truth of God. It may be found, that it is not the Divine word as such, but merely a long-established conception concerning it, that is in peril. The familiar rhythm of the Authorized Version may give place to the less elegant but more accurate Revised without at all imperilling the Divine word itself. Even so it may be discovered, that some conceptions, rendered precious by their very age, must be removed in order that the church may better appreciate

its sacred inheritance. At all events to search diligently has the distinct authorization of our Lord Himself; nor has the church failed in any age to apply to the study of Scripture the scholarship of its day. To duly and fairly weigh the results of modern critical investigations by the aid of enlightened scholarship is to-day the paramount duty. Dean Church wrote to Dr. Asa Gray in 1861 concerning *Essays and Reviews*: "There has been a great deal of unwise panic, and unjust and hasty abuse; and people, who have not an inkling of the difficulties which beset the questions, are for settling them in a summary way, which is perilous for every one. However, I hope the time of protest and condemnation is now passing away; and the time of examination and discussion in a quieter tone beginning" (*Life*, p. 157). Such is ever the true spirit which meets the difficulties face to face, duly measuring their value and significance.

Moreover the time is suitable to appreciate the results of analytical methods, in one department at least. Though on one side an impartial criticism has not yet arrived at a final decision touching the Pentateuch, on the other a final issue has been reached. *Literary analysis* has completed its work, and herein we find unanimity among the critics. Sayce maintains, on the other hand, that "enough has been brought to light and interpreted by the student of Oriental antiquity to enable us to test and correct the conclusions of the critic, and to demonstrate that his scepticism has been carried to an extreme. The period of scepticism is over, the period of reconstruction has begun" (p. 24).

Thus the dissecting knife of the analyst has completed

its task, while the Orientalist claims that his revelations can confound the conclusions of the other. The true student of Holy Writ will accept neither without ample proof. Not for the specialist only is such an attitude necessary, and the matter one of profound interest, but for all endued with ordinary intelligence. Mr. Gladstone claims that "the only specialism which can be of the smallest value here is that of the close observer of human nature, of the student of human action and of the methods which Divine providence employs in the conduct of its dealings with men." With him also agrees W. R. Smith, that, though the methods of arriving at the conclusions may be intricate, the results can yet be presented to the average intellect so as to win its assent (cf. Preface to *Prolegomena*, viii. p.).

Criticism has been happily defined as a "genuine scientific passion for seeing things as they are" (Sidgwick). (Note IV.). Hence one of the primary conditions of true and sound criticism is clearness of vision. To secure that, one must divest himself of all prejudice in the pursuit of truth. Antagonism to the supernatural, *simply as such*, disqualifies at once for the scientific study of the Bible. The very claim to be a revelation involves the possibility of supernatural occurrences. And the miraculous is so vital an element in the history of both Testaments, that the denial of the former destroys the credibility of the latter. Fairness of mind and readiness to receive light from all sources without prejudgment to colour the truth, are necessary to all true investigation. (Note V.). "No one," says Huxley, in a truly scientific spirit, "is entitled to say *a priori* that any given so-called miraculous event is im-

possible." Is it not the want of that spirit and his confidence that discredit had befallen miracles, and the supernatural generally—"And miracles do not happen" (*Literature and Dogma*, p. 12)—which prevented Matthew Arnold from appreciating fully the mysteries of that Hebrew literature, whose charm had laid its spell upon him?

To start therefore with the assertion that "Supernaturalism is the death of history" (Kuenen), leads naturally to the conclusion that the existence of supernatural events in the records wrecks their credibility. (Note VI.). Evidently too, disbelief in the possibility of miracle, or prophecy, has marked much of Continental criticism. Such prejudice renders impartial criticism a sheer impossibility. And inasmuch as the idea of revelation finds place in all religions—not merely that of the Hebrews, and as the necessity of such a revelation is felt the more deeply in proportion to the loftiness of the conception of the God which any religion possesses, all scientific study of religion is at once vitiated by such denial. Kuenen and Wellhausen have both written under the influence of an acknowledged naturalism, and hence the presence of miracle or prophecy at once discredits a record. Thus with them the facts of the record have to obey the exigencies of a theory. One thing however is striking and noteworthy. The sacred records are not lavish of miracles in the narrative. In the Old Testament they are almost entirely confined to two great crises in the history of the nation—creative epochs, when the nation was founded at the Exodus, and led forth to its destined inheritance, and also when the religion of

Jehovah was engaged in severe conflict with the worship of the Tyrian Baal under Ahab. Miracles naturally attend these great revelations of Jehovah to and on behalf of Israel. Their presence, therefore, is in harmony with the circumstances.

To criticize criticism also, one must abandon pre-judgment. All criticism is not necessarily antagonistic to the supernatural. To so represent it creates an obstacle, not only to a due estimation of modern criticism, but also of the Divine revelation itself. That such is the case is evident from the adoption of the critical results by the veteran commentator, Delitzsch, without surrendering his living faith in the Eternal and Invisible. His devout spirit prostrated itself reverently before the revelation of God. With clear, unhesitating faith in the risen Christ, and in all involved in that cardinal fact of Christianity, he moved forward fearlessly, realizing his own saying, that "the love of truth, submission to the force of truth, is a sacred duty, an element of the fear of God" (Genesis, p. 55). What distinguishes English from much of Continental criticism is this *belief in the supernatural*. "His criticism was from first to last a reverent and believing criticism. It was separated in its entire compass by the strong belief in the supernatural, in miracle, and in prophecy, from the alien criticism, with which it was at first ignorantly confounded. The Bible he held to be the record of the personal revelation of God." Such was the testimony of Prof. Salmond to the late W. Robertson Smith. Driver also accepts, "*as a matter of course*," the doctrine that the Old Testament is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man, and holds that the basis of the critical views

are "entirely irrespective of the miraculous character of the events" (*Contemp. Rev.*, 1890, 223, 229). Such being the attitude of the great body of our British scholars, this fact must arrest us from concluding that criticism and denial of the supernatural are convertible terms; or that the results of criticism are *necessarily* destructive of faith. Moreover, even if it be granted that disbelief in the possibility of miracle and prophecy is at the root of much of Continental criticism, that does not exonerate us from having due regard to the result of their investigations, as bearing on the outworks of revelation. Even hostile criticism may reveal, and also induce the surrender of positions untenable—positions due to false conceptions or prejudice—and so serve the cause of truth. Prof. Wace declared that Huxley had not by his assaults rendered the Gadarene miracle incredible, but rather removed the only difficulty in the way of believing it. Reverent criticism removes the accretions—themselves vulnerable, and so impairing the strength of the Word—and enables the truth to reveal itself in its simplicity and strength.

Hence, as Montefiore says (p. 4), evidently the conclusions of criticism must be received "with that cautious readiness, which should welcome the results of scientific investigation, and with the reverence which the subject demands." Criticism is ever a blessing, and issues in establishing the faith. The most fearless criticism wedded to reverence is not a fearful thing. The history of New Testament studies should banish all fear, for the most searching investigation has simply revealed its worth and established its authority. The conditions of the New Testament problems and those of the Old Testament

now offer some striking parallels, and invite comparison, but the analogy may be pressed too far. The struggle is not now between advocates and opponents of the supernatural. Yet the victory then won over the Tübingen School should inspire the church to-day to enter with confidence upon full investigation. Truth has more to fear from ignorance than from knowledge. It is not too fragile to be freely handled and scrutinized. The character of the subject should banish all cavilling and superciliousness; the difficulties as well as our own ignorance should exclude dogmatism; with reverent freedom should the Word of God be investigated, fully assured that it cannot be robbed of its value, but that deepest study will reveal the firm foundation of the revelation of God. To hold that thus God's truth is imperilled argues want of faith, and a mistaken zeal which, to say the least, borders upon irreverence. The weighty words of Liddon (*Elements of Religion*, p. 24) apply to the revelation as well as to the Being revealed: "In no department of human knowledge is haziness deemed a merit: by nothing is an educated mind more distinguished than by the resolute effort to mark the exact frontiers of its knowledge and its ignorance; to hesitate only where hesitation is necessary; to despair of knowledge only when knowledge is ascertainably out of reach. Surely on the highest and most momentous of all questions, this same precision may be asked for with reverence and in reason; surely the human mind is not bound to forget its noblest instincts, when it approaches the throne and presence of its Maker."

Certain assured results have been secured in the field

of Old Testament studies. That in advancing to these results, various and even conflicting theories have been proposed, the one revising and superseding the other, must not *in itself* be urged as an argument against them. By tentative steps have all sciences moved forward to arrive finally at a firm basis. The modern conclusions in relation to the Bible are not of recent growth, but have been gradually reached in the teeth of adverse criticism. As there is now agreement on some leading questions, the problem is to ascertain such facts, and to estimate their issues. Sanday thinks, that "it is impossible to resist the impression that the critical argument is in the stronger hands, and that it is accompanied by a far greater command of the materials. The cause of criticism is the winning cause" (*Inspiration*, p. 116). Manifestly then, the duty is to ascertain what are these assured results; not how much can be retained, or how much conceded with safety, but what has been established, and therefore necessarily to be accepted. No adherent of the Protestant Reformation can refuse loyally to address all his energies to such a pursuit, fully conscious that no external authority should dominate the conscience, and that it is simply suicidal to deprive it of all possible means of better apprehension of Divine truth. To receive truth from any and every quarter is an elementary duty. The theory of evolution touching the origin of the universe has ere this been assimilated by a large number of Christians without sacrifice of personal faith. It remains to be established if a like theory touching the origin of the Hebrew religion and literature may or must be accepted. It cannot be denied that modern criticism has thrown light upon

and led to a clearer apprehension of many points in Hebrew history and literature. Therefore the conclusions must not be rejected simply because they conflict with previous conceptions, or even because they emanate from quarters hostile to the faith. A Christian will be always ready for vigorous defence of truth once ascertained, and equally ready to accept all facts that illuminate it.

One condition, however, must rule the inquiry—the fact of revelation, which involves belief in the supernatural. Belief in the possibility of a communication of the will of God to man is the inheritance of the race, and necessarily accompanies the theistic position. This must be predicated of the three theistic religions—the Hebrew, the Christian, and the Mohammedan. The Old Testament claims to be a record of the revelation of Jehovah, and not merely of the aspirations or experiences of men. As such alone can it be fairly estimated, and the theory which denies its possibility, disqualifies itself thereby to explain the Bible, however much it may contribute to its elucidation. (Note VII.). This, therefore, must be a fundamental principle, all sound criticism will agree with the object of its operation, else it will render itself wholly antagonistic and destructive. It will at once be seen then, that the acknowledgment of the presence of the element of revelation is calculated to complicate the application of scientific methods and seriously qualify the results. At the same time, without that admission, no critic is efficiently equipped for this study. Pervading the writings, woven into their very texture, is the claim that God has spoken and laid His impelling hand upon the prophets. To deny that is to rend the robe of revelation to pieces,

and to discredit the consciousness of the nation and its prophets. The presence of revelation may create difficulties, but not so many, or so fundamental, as the elimination of it from the record. We claim, therefore, that no method is scientific which does not examine the writings, duly recognizing the presence of that super-human element. We are not asked, however, to abandon revelation, but merely to revise our views as to its *form*. Delitzsch and Dillmann, Driver and Robertson Smith, have found no necessary conflict between the assured results of criticism and belief in inspiration. "Critical conclusions," says Driver (*Introd.* viii. p.), "affect not the *fact* of revelation, but only its *form*. They help to determine the stages through which it passed, the different phases which it assumed, and the process by which the record of it was built up. They do not touch either the authority or the inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old Testament." The discussions of the higher criticism relate to the *form* of revelation; and, *presupposing inspiration*, it seeks only to determine its modes of operating, and to examine the literary forms in which it embodied itself. Hence a distinction is drawn between the revelation and the record—between the religion and the documents, which record its history. Revelation and Bible are evidently not synonymous, and the former may precede and even be independent of the latter. God manifesting Himself to man in various ways—that is revelation: the record of such manifestation to Israel in its long history—that is the Old Testament. When however it is held to be "of fundamental importance to disengage the religious from the critical and historical problems" (*Contemp. Rev.*, 1890,

231 p.), it may well be questioned if that is really possible. The Bible is the history of religion, and as the record of a historical revelation, no sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between the form and the spirit. The one moulds the other. And as this historical revelation wields a deep influence over the whole realm of faith and practice, the issues are very material.

It may further be premised, in order to remove any prejudice against the name, that HIGHER CRITICISM involves no haughty assertion of superiority, but is a mere term of distinction between two related branches of study. As applied to persons, it has been often an instrument of sarcasm, as shallow as it is flippant. Its original and legitimate function is to discriminate between the study of the internal and of the external. The autographs of both Testaments are lost. Copies, yea, copies of copies, of the original writings are now our sole possessions. Each instance of copying offered possibilities of error in various forms. Hence the necessity for the *lower*, or textual criticism, which by patient toil, as well as trained skill and balanced judgment, in collecting and comparing manuscripts, versions or translations, and quotations, strives to arrive at the most perfect text attainable. In the case of the New Testament, owing to the wealth and variety of the materials, it may be reasonably claimed that a well-nigh perfect text has been already obtained. The Old Testament differs from the New, both in the paucity of the materials and in the lateness of their age. And whereas the extant early MSS. of the New Testament exhibit great differences of readings, "all the more considerable" of which "must have arisen before the

latter half of the fourth century" (Westcott and Hort), the Old Testament MSS. present the singular feature of *uniformity* of text. That that text does not of necessity express the true original is evident from comparison with the Greek translation, which dates a thousand years before our oldest extant Hebrew MSS., and which exhibits considerable variations. (Note VIII.). Such is the office of the LOWER CRITICISM, which devotes itself solely to the detection and removal of errors, and thus seeks to recover the exact words written originally by the author.

The HIGHER CRITICISM differs from "her lower sister, who busies herself only with words" (Eichhorn), and into whose labours she enters, in that *her* province is to scrutinize the style, language, and contents of a book—to discuss its origin, date, and literary structure—to utilize every department of knowledge, which may contribute to the better apprehension of its age—to compare it with other productions of the same period—and finally, by careful balancing of probabilities to test the historical value, and determine the authorship of the book.

Higher Criticism is therefore not necessarily sceptical. It is really a necessity of an age, which has inherited the intellectual work of the past. The progress made in science and scholarship renders it imperative that the human mind thus furnished should exercise itself on the Divine word. That the Bible is unique is self-evident, but its eminence consists of the blending together of the human and the Divine, so as to afford a field for the exercise of the highest scholarship, which would reverently endeavour to interpret it. This forms one of the most noteworthy features of the present—its honest effort

to arrive at a correct apprehension of the Scriptures. It is true indeed that the Bible has received unique treatment at the hand of both friend and foe. Isolated by the former from all other literature, it has been the subject of much capricious interpretation, which diminished its human interest; from its foes it has scarcely received that fair treatment to which it is entitled, only "*as another book.*" The very necessity for such a science as Textual Criticism demonstrates that no doctrine of Inspiration can finally close the discussion. The history of our Authorized Version and the existence of the Revised, afford sufficient proof to the English reader, that much has yet to be settled before any doctrine of Inspiration can foreclose inquiry, even if the recovery of the original autographs themselves would justify it. Bishop Lightfoot, in his essays on *Supernatural Religion*, p. 82, remarks: "We Christians are constantly told that we must expect to have our records tested by the same standards which are applied to other writings. This is exactly what we desire, and what we do not get. It is not easy to imagine the havoc which would ensue if the critical principles of the Tübingen school and their admirers were let loose on the classical literature of Greece and Rome." (Note IX.). That the Bible should be treated as a literary composition—as another book—may be readily conceded, for such study, if ruled by reverence and candour, will inevitably lead to the conviction, that it stands alone among all human writings. Let there be meted to it that criticism which shall combine fairness of interpretation, with recognition of intelligence, honesty and piety on the part of the writers. The Bible,

by the very nature of its contents, invites criticism. Its name—Bible—though now used as a singular noun, is the representative of a plural form, which suggested at once a number of independent writings grouped together to form one whole. Its variety is at once apparent, and the accuracy of the title—The Divine Library—(the first simple collective title of the whole Bible—found in the writings of Jerome in the IV century), is clearly demonstrated. It contains history, legislation, poetry, proverbs, philosophical discussions, &c., writings of most varied character and spread over a millennium. Combined with that variety, there is a unity equally evident. Now that diversity is not the result of the collocation of all extant Hebrew literature, nor is it a haphazard collection of different specimens of composition. The variety is the result of selection, which secures a unity, not external and artificial, but vital and organic. It is the history of the manifestation of God to man.

The Scriptures also present all the conditions of human literature. The thought, language, and style, are all human, and the great questions dealt with are also human. God was not pleased to create a holy language for the revelation of Himself. Three different languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek—the products of three great civilizations—yield themselves to the service of the Divine purposes. This not only renders the revelation intelligible to man, but as language influences our conceptions themselves, as well as the expression of them, this human element becomes a most important factor. The vehicle is human in the fullest sense.

This interaction of the Divine and human introduces a

problem as interesting as it is difficult. GOD is there revealing Himself to man, but as apprehended by man : MAN is there pouring out his thoughts, questions, prayers, and aspirations. *It is both human and Divine.* Now the operations of criticism and scholarship lie on the *human* side, and the tendency of the investigations of the past hundred years has been to emphasize and extend the human element. The pendulum oscillated from the position assumed in the period succeeding the Reformation, when the Divine was emphasized to the entire submergence of the human. The *separation* of the human and Divine must ever be attended with loss. The best appreciation of the Word is that which duly recognizes the twofold elements so mysteriously blended together. The earthen vessels condition, and are conditioned by, the exceeding greatness of the power of God. The Scriptures therefore cannot fail to raise questions in the thoughtful mind, and every question so raised constitutes the reader a *higher critic*. To observe in Genesis duplicate accounts of the Creation and the Flood, similar yet differing; to find in the following books laws relating to the same matters, yet diverging; to place the three sections of the Hebrew Bible side by side (Note X.), comparing the Law with the Prophets, and both with the Hagiographa—all such matters lie within the domain of the Higher Criticism. Evidently, therefore, reverent freedom is a prime necessity, and in the combination of reverence and freedom lies safety at all times. The form invites freedom, because human; the nature of the contents demands reverence, because Divine. Butler was very cautious not “to vilify reason, which is indeed the only faculty we have where-

with to judge concerning anything, even revelation itself ;" but, at the same time, he held " that upon supposition of a revelation, it is highly credible beforehand we should be incompetent judges of it to a great degree " (*Anal.* pt. 2, chap. iii.). True science is ever reverent, observing all the facts presented for consideration, and therefrom deducing fair and honest inferences, recognizing its own limitations and stopping short of arbitrary assumptions. Such a method we desiderate in Biblical studies. When it is said that " explaining away is a process that has no place in fair historical inquiry, though unfortunately it has long played a great part in Biblical interpretation " (O. T. J. C., p. 421), it may be replied that the freedom of analytical critics in excising *as interpolations* texts, or portions of texts, that fail to conform with the theory dominant, rivals the ingenuity of traditional attempts to explain away its difficulties. A preconceived theory, be it Traditional or Modern, is an arbitrary tribunal to which to summon the text and contents of Scripture.



**HISTORY AND SKETCH
OF
OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM.**

"But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither shalt thou come."

DEUTERONOMY.

"From the beginning onwards the history of Israel moved toward the goal of centralization."

DELITZSCH.

"One of the most assured results of the literary analysis of the Old Testament records has been the existence of documents of different age and authorship in the Pentateuch. The literary foundation, upon which the history and religion of Israel rested, is in its present form a composite work."

SAYCE.

"The great change of perspective which the new criticism introduces into the sacred history is, that it places at the centre of that history, no longer Moses on Sinai, but the choir of the prophets."

DARMESTER.

HISTORY AND SKETCH OF OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM.

I.

THE history of Old Testament Criticism is that of a movement of great antiquity. Its conclusions have been gradually reached in the teeth of counter criticism. The Apostolic age itself had its Pentateuchal question of profound significance, when the relation of the Jewish Law to the Christian faith was a burning question. The first impugner of the genuineness of the Pentateuch was the author of the *Clementine Homilies* in the second century A.D., who, though regarding it as the chief of Old Testament books, maintained that various foreign elements had been introduced from time to time into the true Mosaic writings. He was also the father of those who, "by an exercise of criticism," eliminate what forms an obstacle to their theory. (Note XI.). The Gnostics in the same century, by placing the Old Testament in antagonism to the New, forced the Church to deal with the problem, and to realize that revelation had a development, and that the plane of the New was higher than that of the Old. "It was the absence of the notion of development, and therefore of degrees of Inspiration which involved the Gnostics in all their difficulties about the Old Testament. For, conceiving that the morality of all its characters, and the

obvious anthropomorphism of its language were to be judged by the highest Christian standard, they had no alternative but to reject the Old Testament altogether" (*Illingworth*, 167f). The difference between that period and the present may be thus represented; *then* the discussion was in the main theological, touching the substance of the books, yet not without involving criticism bearing on the form; whereas the *present* is mainly critical, yet involving deeper and more momentous questions. Thus the question is one of the oldest in the history of the Church. Both in the Jewish and Christian Churches, the narrative of the death and burial of Moses in a book reputed to be from his own pen (Deut. xxxiv. 5-12), first interfered with the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch. Philo and Josephus, however, had attributed that same passage to him as written in the spirit of prophecy. To this were speedily added those notes of time and place (Gen. xii. 6, xiii. 7, 18, xiv. 8, xix. 37f), xxvi. 1, &c.), which are evidently the work of a later hand. Such were the arguments of Ibn Ezra in the XII A.D., a Jewish scholar and poet. In 1651, Hobbes, in his *Leviathan*, held that Moses did not write the entire Pentateuch, as we have it now, but himself produced what he is expressly *said to have written*. The Jewish philosopher, Spinoza, followed in 1670, rejecting the supernatural altogether, and dismissing as impossible, from the pen of Moses, such passages as Num. xii. 3, 7f, Deut. xxxiv. 10. In present form it is the work of Ezra, though some portions are admittedly Mosaic. The father of the modern criticism of the Old Testament was R. Simon (1638-1712), a member of the Roman Catholic Church,

who made the first scientific attempt at historical criticism, and, finding different styles in the Pentateuch, inferred different authors for them. Yet the Pentateuch was so far regarded as essentially Mosaic.

The latter half of the XVII century witnessed a new and fertile departure, and the work of investigation advanced stage by stage. Jean Astruc, a Roman Catholic and physician of Louis XIV, in Paris, in 1753 published his *Conjectures*, arguing from the occurrence of different Divine names (Elohim and Jehovah) in Genesis the use by Moses of different documents already existing. There were two *great* originals, together with nine or ten lesser ones, the arrangement of which by Moses in parallel columns accounts for the repetitions. 1753 also witnessed the publication in England of Lowth, Bishop of London's work on Hebrew poetry, followed in 1778 by his *Isaiah*. These were translated into German, and formed an epoch in giving prominence to the *literary* character of the Old Testament. These writings were, according to Cheyne, "among the revolutionary influences of that unsettled age in Germany" (*Founders*, 4). Herder also, court preacher at Weimar, taught that the Bible, being literature, must be studied in the light of the time, place, and surroundings of its several parts, to be fully appreciated. Such were the elements pervading the mind of the period. In 1780, Eichhorn, the distinguished Orientalist and "cautiously bold critic," examined the writings themselves as to style and contents, and recognized the dependence of the Mosaic books on original sources. This formed the DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS, and was designed to meet the difficulties raised against the Mosaic authorship. Genesis consisted

mainly of the Elohist and Jehovistic documents, and the four following books grew out of writings of Moses, or of his contemporaries. Thus he held the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch.

The recognition of the same features in the following books as in Genesis led to the FRAGMENTARY HYPOTHESIS, held by the Scotch Roman Catholic Geddes, and the German Vater, according to which the five books are simply an aggregation of fragments without any bond of union. The evident presence of a unity pervading the Pentateuch speedily rendered this theory untenable. The analysis analyzed itself to death.

With the XIX century, and under the guidance of De Wette and Bleek, the study advances apace, and arrives at certain definite results—the SUPPLEMENTARY THEORY. To the Pentateuch was added the Book of Joshua, as historically supplementing the former books, and as sharing with them the same literary features. The six books were then termed the Hexateuch. Of these six, Deuteronomy readily stood aloof from the rest, and presented marked features of its own. Its repetition of the law is characterized by a hortatory or parenetic form, which, together with a style so chaste and peculiar, gives the book a unique position in the Old Testament. Driver: “It is more than a mere code of laws set in historical framework; it is the expression of a profound ethical and religious spirit, which determines its character in every part. . . . Nowhere else in the O. T. do we breathe such an atmosphere of generous devotion to God, and of large-hearted benevolence towards man; and nowhere else is it shown with the same fulness of detail

how these principles may be made to permeate the entire life of the community" (*Introd.* 77, 79).

The other books parted into two great portions. That which opens the Pentateuch (Gen. i.-ii. 4a, *i.e.*, to the word "created") included much of Genesis, the greater part of Exodus and Numbers, all Leviticus, together with portions of Joshua. From its use of Elohim for God (up to Exodus vi. 2f, wherein the revelation of the name "JEHOVAH" is given), it was termed ELOHIST, and from its containing the ceremonial legislation, the *Priestly Code* being therefore designated by the symbol P. This was then regarded as the Primary Document, and called Grundschrift, or foundation-writing.

Under the *Supplementary theory* the remaining portion was regarded as the work of a writer who used the name *Jehovah*, and thence was called the JEHOVIST, and represented by J. This author added to the document P the histories and laws, which lie *without* the Priestly Code. Such a representation of the nature of J was, however, speedily felt to be unsatisfactory, and when Hupfeld, in 1853, proved the *independence* of J, that theory completely collapsed. Hupfeld further analyzed this *not P* portion of Genesis, and found the use of Elohim by a writer distinct both from P and from J, but in features resembling the *latter*. Subsequent studies established that position, but revealed the difficulty of separating J and E at all times. Beginning therefore at Gen. ii. 4b. ("In the day . . ."), and running through that and the following books (except Leviticus), we have a document giving "a series of cameos of the Patriarchal and Mosaic age in a style free, flowing, and picturesque." This

closely-mortized document combines two parallel narratives, the one E current in Northern Israel, and the other J in the South. The Patriarchal stories in either linger about the sites peculiar to its own division. Moreover, between the two there are marked differences of style and vocabulary. When, however, they were united into one—JE—is a disputed question.

Such were the results of the studies up to the middle of the XIX century. The Hexateuch is a whole formed by the combination by an editor, or redactor, of three great and independent documents. Thus the separation of P is regarded as the point of departure of positive criticism of the sources of the Old Testament. Addis thinks that, if printed separately, the analysis of the Hexateuch into its component documents would justify itself (Note XII.).

When compared, the differences between JE and P become manifest. Of P, Dillmann says, that "without doubt the author belongs to the circle of the priests at the central sanctuary in Jerusalem." "His aim is to give a systematic view, from a *priestly* standpoint, of the origin and chief institutions of the Israelitish theocracy" (Driver, 126). In the Patriarchal period he busies himself about the *origin of institutions* (Sabbath, Circumcision, &c.), and records the covenants which God made with men. Its contents are chiefly laws with some history as incidental to them, and valuable in that relation only. Its *historical* framework forms a contrast to the history of JE, and its legislation dealing with worship contrasts with the *civil* code of D. Its style is described as prosaic, formal, and inflexible in thought and language.

In method, style, and contents, JE offers a striking contrast to P. Dillmann: "In contrast to the sober intellectuality of the P writings, they are books of lifelike directness and poetic beauty." Both start from the Creation and pass through the Patriarchal age, dwelling upon the matters of interest to either. JE has a code of laws—the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xx.-xxiii., xxxiv.), but is chiefly history, and is entitled by Addis—"The oldest book of Hebrew History." Ritual finds little place in its laws, which form a civil rather than a religious code. In narratives, which are models of ease and grace, the story of the origins of the Hebrew nation and of the human race is told, and the great problems of human history (Fall, &c.) touched upon. "Like the prophets, he is fond of connecting even the beginnings of the human race with the mission of Israel. His style is richer than that of P, his aim much more definitely religious" (Schultz i. 64). While P does not record any offering of sacrifice till after the giving of the Law on Sinai, JE has frequent mention of altar and sacrifice in the Pre-Mosaic period, and loves to dwell on the sites in Palestine rendered sacred by association with their ancestors. "The Prophetical narrative (*i.e.* JE), from which the popular view of the Patriarchal and Mosaic period is mostly derived, exhibits to us the lives and doings of the Patriarchs and their descendants, in a series of pictures, graphic in delineation, inimitable in literary form, and evincing a delicacy of touch and expression, a warmth of religious sympathy, and a keenness of moral and psychological perception, unsurpassed in the writings of the Old Testament" (Sermons, 51 p).

In order of composition, P was hitherto regarded as the older—*Ground-writing*—both because of its position in the writings and also because Moses was conceived of as a lawgiver, rather than as a historian. Moreover the stress laid by it on ritual seemed in accord with an earlier age than the prominence given by D to ethics. The greater simplicity of the latter in matters pertaining to religious forms savoured of modifications in view of practical difficulties. Then again the legislation of J and D dealt with settled, whereas P referred to a nomadic life. Hence the conclusions of analysis arranged the documents: P the oldest, JE second, D youngest.

II.

THE last three decades of this century witnessed a complete revision of the *order*, but not of the contents of these three sources. The exact limits of the several documents are determined. Their relation to each other is revised. This period in the history of our country has been most momentous in several respects. The scientific works of Darwin, Wallace, and Spencer, filled the thoughts of men with the theory of Evolution, and created a profound impression. Law and Development became the watchwords of the age. By long and protracted ascent are the steps traced from lower forms to higher, until the vision of a marvellous unity is unfolded. And before this all-pervading reign of law, there seemed no place for the supernatural. The *absence* of a theory of development we have seen to have been the great difficulty of the

II century (cf. p. 29); its *prominence* is the difficulty of the XIX. This spirit of the age, athirst for unity, could not fail to affect deeply the existing opinion concerning Religion and Revelation. Nor has Christianity yet fully discharged its duty, or reaped the fruits yet to be garnered from the efficient study and utilization of this great doctrine of our age.

This period also witnessed the publication of the *Essays and Reviews*, and of Colenso's writings on the Pentateuch (p. 5). The direct contribution of the latter to the course of critical studies was his showing, according to Kuenen, the unhistorical character of the narratives in P. Now the criticism of the Old Testament assumed a new phase with revolutionary results. That purely *literary* stage, which prevailed from Astruc to Colenso, passed away, and the contents are cast into the crucible of *historical* criticism. Attention was henceforth concentrated on the matter, rather than on the language and style. Each document contains a code of Laws, which on comparison with each other reveal striking differences as well as similarities. That of JE (Exodus xx.-xxiii., xxxiv.) was the simplest, D (Deut. xii.-xxvi.) being more elaborate, and P still more so. Now the great working hypothesis of the age—Evolution—demanded that these should be arranged accordingly, and so present a development from the less to the more elaborate legislation. Then again, these codes were placed in the light of the other writings—the Former and Latter Prophets, and the Hagiographa (cf. Note X.), which are declared to support this latest arrangement of the Codes. Reuss,—“the Nestor of Old Testament students in our own time”—(1804-1891), was

lecturing in Strassburg on Old Testament introduction in 1834, when it came to him "rather as an intuition than as a logical conclusion—that the Prophets are earlier than the Law, and the Psalms later than both." It was to him *psychologically* inconceivable, that the *complete* Levitical system of ritual should stand at the *start* of Israel's religious development. Moreover, the Mosaic codes he declared to be unknown to the authors of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and so nonexistent then.

Thus the criticism passed from the literary to the historical stage. Graf († 1869), one of the pupils of Reuss, became Professor in Meissen, where he elaborated the hints of his master in 1866. Kuenen (1828-91), Professor in Leyden, in 1869 completed the work which Graf's death had left unfinished. The investigation of the historical books now revealed a development in the religious practices of the nation, so that the variant codes fitted into the periods of the history. In 1878 was published the *History of Israel*, by Wellhausen, Professor of Oriental languages at Marburg, gathering up the results of the past, and presenting the theory with such coherence, such marked ability and attractive style, as to make it dominant in Germany. Its main theme is whether the law of Moses "is the starting-point for the history of ancient Israel, or not rather for that of Judaism, *i.e.*, of the religious communion which survived the destruction of the nation by the Assyrians and Chaldæans" (We., 1). In his *Encyclopædia Britannica* article on the BIBLE, W. Robertson Smith, who was, according to Cheyne, "the most brilliant critic of the Old Testament in English-speaking countries," and "the most brilliant exponent"

of Wellhausen's theory, introduced the theory to England, and in 1885 wrote the preface to the English translation of Wellhausen's great work. With various shades of modification, the theory has been very widely accepted, and it must be recognized that the leading Hebraists and theologians have adopted the newer conclusions in a more or less modified form. Most significant was the attitude of the late Dr. Delitzsch, who, in issuing the fifth edition of his *Genesis* in 1887, declared his acceptance of the chief conclusions of criticism, but not so as to admit the premiss of denying the supernatural. In his Preface (p. v.) he writes: "I am not a believer in the Religion of the times of Darwin. I am a believer in two orders of things, and not merely in one, which the miraculous would drill holes in. I believe in the Easter announcement, and I accept its deductions."

III.

WE.: "To assign the true order of the different strata of the Pentateuch was equivalent to a reconstruction of the history of Israel." And subversive as the results of recent criticism appear to be, such "indeed they are not, except in a good sense," we are assured by Cheyne: nor can they appear so, except to "readers who have not assimilated the virtually new critical principles, and who are not quick at recombining fresh results into a new historical picture" (*Prophets* xxvii.). Evidently therefore the pressing duty lies in criticizing criticism—in examining both methods and results. Now it must be premised

that sound criticism, be it termed "moderate," or "extreme," or "thorough," must accept in fairness the writings to be examined as genuine and trustworthy. No theory must be made arbiter of the books, but the latter must be the basis of the theory. It will also contribute to a better appreciation of the matter if a distinction be drawn between the metaphysical question—*Can* miracles ever happen? and the historical question—*Have* miracles ever happened? Against the *impossibility* of the penetration of human life by the supernatural—revelation—lies the consciousness of the Old Testament prophets, to whom the Lord had spoken, and on whom He laid His hand. This is also supplemented by the consciousness of the nation. Due—not undue—place must be given to the traditions of a nation, especially such as are herein contained. Maintaining therefore that hostility to the supernatural is no qualification of a Biblical Critic, and that no theory based on such antagonism can be permitted to adjudge the credibility, or otherwise, of these sacred writings, we proceed to expound the basis of these newer results and to test them.

The legislation is divided into strata, and the historical books into periods. (Note XIII.). The one represents the rule, the other illustrates it in the life of the nation. However, not only are the various strata of legislation reflected at various stages of the history, but also they themselves are reflections, or sum up the religious history and development of Israel. One question arrests us here to be referred to later. Does not this necessitate that the history is written *with the view of illustrating the codes*? Granted the existence of a law, which would

more probably find place in the record—observance or non-observance? This however leaves untouched the question, whether the events recorded contravene the spirit and word of the legislation.

The earliest code—that of JE, the Book of the Covenant—(Exod. xx.-xxiii., xxxiv.) prescribes few and simple ordinances of worship. Its great feature is the prominence given to social duties, and seems well suited for the guidance of those who presided over the nation as JUDGES. A nation of slaves, emerging from a land of bondage, where tyranny and oppression were prevalent, would on their entrance on independent national life find here the elements of well-being and safety. And it is not to be forgotten that the nation, the relation of whose several members to each other is therein defined, stands *as a unit* face to face with its God. “The whole Old Testament religion deals with the relation between two parties—Jehovah on the one hand and the nation of Israel on the other” (W. R. S., 20). That being so, *unity is at all events a ruling thought.*

Exod. xx. 24 prescribes the sacrifice upon an altar of earth “*by any Israelite*” in any place marked by Divine manifestation. Here, we are informed, a plurality of altars is implied, and no priestly class or any one sanctuary defined—“in every place” (R. V.). Such freedom and simplicity mark it as the earliest, and as corresponding to the practices of the Patriarchs who erect altars, set up pillars, plant trees and dig wells wherever they go. These places became afterwards famous shrines. “In the Books of Judges and Samuel hardly a place is mentioned, at which we have not at least casual mention of an altar

and of sacrifice" (We. 17). Stress is also laid on the offering of sacrifice by Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon at various places, and on the lamentation of Elijah (1 Kings xix. 10)—"the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine *altars*"—*not one altar, but several*. We. 22, further says that "throughout the whole of the earlier period of the history of Israel, the restriction of worship to a single selected place was unknown to any one, even as a pious desire."

Can it be the same writer, who says of the time of the Judges—"Any strict centralization is for that period inconceivable, alike in the religious as in every other sphere?" (We. 19). That disturbed period therefore was alien to any centralization, and certainly *may* have interrupted the realizing of that idea. 1 Kings iii. 2 says—"Only the people sacrificed in the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days" (cf. also the following verses). Now *henceforth* in the history the worship at the high places is censured by the historian, and no king escapes that condemnation. Looking back to the *Judges*, we find the worship of other gods severely condemned as causes of national calamities, and the erection of an altar to Jehovah always connected with a theophany (cf. vi. 24, xiii. 15ff). No word suggests *toleration* of the high places, and when the next period opens with the Ark in Shiloh, (1 Sam. i. 3ff), where Eli ministered as priest and ruled as judge, the sins of his sons led to the destruction of his house, and the sins of the people to their captivity, as well as that of the Ark, and also to the destruction of Shiloh (1 Sam. iv., Psalm lxxviii. 58ff, Jerem. vii. 12f, xxvi. 6). Now apart from

Elijah, the instances of worship recorded fall into that period extending from the destruction of Shiloh to the erection of the Temple. The times were exceptional, as were also the persons and their actions. Returning to the text of Exod. xx. 24, we found *Thou*, which is interpreted "*by any Israelite.*" As the command is addressed to the entire people, 22 v., *as a unity*, may it not have regard to the action of the nation through its representatives? But even if it be granted to be the privilege of every individual of the nation, where does the *Priestly Code* ever directly and positively forbid that? Does the appointment of a fixed ministry necessarily exclude all spontaneous action on the part of the people? Further, "*in every place*" is said to mean many altars reared contemporaneously throughout the land, thus negating the idea of one central sanctuary as legalized yet. W. R. Smith says that "*a Hebraist*" should not "maintain that Exod. xx. 24 refers, not to coexisting sanctuaries in Canaan, but to altars successively reared at different places in the wilderness." (*Proph.* 394). Driver, who is certainly a *Hebraist*, admits that the Hebrew words translated *in every place* "may include equally places conceived as existing contemporaneously, or selected successively" (*Introd.* 86 n.). There is certainly a difference of phraseology between Exod. xx. 24 and Deut. xii. 11, but the NAME is in both and is connected with the manifestation of Jehovah. And is not the expression, "where I record my name," an evidence of Divine *limitation*, rather than of unrestricted authorization of altar-rearing? It may also be added that, with the exception of Num. iii. 31, 1 Kings xix. 10, Psalm lxxxiv. 3, the plural form "*altars*," is not used of

Jehovah, though frequently employed concerning the heathen worship. This command so restricted does certainly fall in with the conditions of the nomad life of the wilderness as they moved from stage to stage, and may be regarded as preparatory for that more restricted command found in the Deuteronomic and Priestly Codes. (Note XIV.).

Moreover, the command to appear before Jehovah (Exod. xxiii. 17, 19, xxxiv. 23) necessitates a national assembly, which in turn presupposes a central spot known to all. And the very absence of the *name* of the *place* more naturally suggests conditions when Jerusalem was not the site of a Temple, but the central sanctuary was the temporary location of the Ark of Jehovah. Would a later writer have studiously avoided the mention of that city? If the object of these later compilers and editors had been to create a past to justify the present, would not *that name* have fortified their position considerably? How marvellously free from tripping, these early "*idealizers!*" Further, we have one instrument of the Sanctuary, the Mosaic origin of which is unquestioned—the Ark, which of itself suggests unity of sanctuary. The Ark we know in the war with the Philistines, and its restoration by David later, was a central point—the symbol of the Divine presence. Joshua xxii., recording the dismissal of the two and a half tribes to settle on the east of Jordan (1-8), proceeds to describe their erection of "an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to" (10), and the consequent mustering of "the whole congregation" of Israel at *Shiloh* "to go against them to war." The erection of that altar was regarded as rebellion against

Jehovah (18f), and the catastrophe was averted simply by the declaration of the recognition of "the altar of the Lord our God that is before his tabernacle" (29) as the *sole place for sacrifice*, whereas theirs was simply an altar of *witness*. Concerning the origin of 7-34 Driver is uncertain, and criticism is in straits (*Introd.*, 112f). We. 38, dismisses it as being "erected with no intention that it (the altar) should be used, but merely in commemoration of something." The insinuation follows that this is done to render the period "*orthodox!*" Addis ii. 473 n. says that "the narrative is evidently written with the object of accentuating the unity of worship as a point fixed in the consciousness of the people from the very beginning of their settlement in Canaan." This raises the question of the historicity of the whole passage. Two altars figure here—the legitimate scene of sacrifice and that of the witness. Has the erection of ED a historic basis? Then why deny that to the other? The one involves the other. A theory has not the right to accept the one and reject the other without sounder basis than the bearing of either on the interests of that theory. The tradition there involved implies one sanctuary. Even as in Judges viii. 27, the condemnation of Gideon is only intelligible on the supposition of the legitimacy of one sanctuary, so in Josh. xxii., the acute crisis can only be explained from the same basis. Finally, if the neglect of the Law by the nation proves its nonexistence, the attitude of the people in the closing years of the Kingdom of Judah prove equally conclusively the nonexistence of Deuteronomy! "In truth," says Delitzsch, "the Deuteronomic demand for unity of the cultus is no novelty, but

the demand of the whole Torah in all its constituent parts."

IV.

DEUTERONOMY by style and language, and also by the character of its contents, stands aloof from the rest of the Pentateuch. It contains the two elements of history and law in common with the two other great documents (JE and P), but it is also pervaded by a third, which gives it a peculiar feature—the hortatory strain. It is sermonic in character, and in eloquent language bends both history and law to realize its great purpose. The expressions peculiar to the book are striking (Note XV.), and suggestive of the exalted task which it undertakes to perform. There breathes throughout the highest conception of the character of Jehovah and of the relation of the nation to Him. The duty of love and obedience to Him based on His great love and sovereign grace manifested to them is fundamental. Necessarily, too, the idea of the peril of idolatry and want of loyalty to Jehovah is peculiarly prominent (vii. 5-11, xxvi. 16-19).

It urges in clear terms the recognition of one place wherein Jehovah would put His name (xii. 5ff) to be worshipped with sacrifices, and the destruction of all other altars and centres of worship. Now it is contended that that centralization was unknown throughout the history of Israel up to the time of Josiah; and that the exalted spiritual conception of Jehovah was the offspring of a late age. "We pass from the older conception of monolatry into the fuller and deeper thought of monotheism." (Ryle, B.D., 598).

Between the Jehovist and the Deuteronomist there is a close relationship of dependence, both in the legal and historical sections. "Deut. v.-xi. is a parenetic expansion of the First Commandment of the Decalogue; xii.-xxvi. is an enlarged edition of the Book of the Covenant," *Deut.* p. x. It is an adaptation of older legislation to meet the needs of a more complex and developed community. Therefore by the law of development D must follow after JE, of which it is an enlarged edition. Granted then the literary dependence of D on JE, what distance of time separates them? We. 33: "As the Book of the Covenant, and the whole Jehovistic writing in general, reflects the first pre-prophetic period in the history of the cultus, so Deuteronomy is the legal expression of the second period of struggle and transition." Its demand for the restriction of sacrificial worship to *one* place is the fruit of *experience*. The "many altars," which the earlier Code had recognized (Exod. xx. 24, cf. p. 42 f), had become great centres of corruption and infamous licence, so that their abolition was necessary in the interests of religion and morality.

In the history of the nation, we find in the VIII century B.C. the great prophets, who first committed to writing their utterances—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah—inaugurating a great reformation, both in conception of the Divine Being and of the true method of serving Him. Against idolatry and depraved worship of Jehovah they preach with fiery ardour, and inculcate humanity and love as ruling motives of life.

Now it is held that that prophetic activity *called forth* D. "The author builds upon the foundation of the prophets, and his primary aim is to create an effectual moral

stimulus for realizing the ideals which they had propounded. . . . In a special degree the author of Dt. is the spiritual heir of Hosea. . . . The monotheistic creed of Dt. is another development of the prophets. . . . *Under the conditions of the time*, the single sanctuary was a corollary of the monotheistic idea" (*Deut.* pp. xxvii. ff). Thus D is the heir of the Reforming prophets, which went before Manasseh's time. "One God, one Sanctuary, that is the idea. . . . The idea as *idea* is older than the idea as *history*. In Deuteronomy it appears in its native colours, comes forward with its aggressive challenge to do battle with the actual" (We. 36). Thus we find D placed, as to composition, either in the time of Hezekiah (727-695), or of his son and successor Manasseh (695-640).

D becomes thus of prime importance, and its date the pivot of the whole question. Cornill regards the separation of Dt. as a document (by De Wette, cf. p. 32) as "the first purchase for the true understanding of the religious history of Israel;" while Kittel declares that the "Post-Mosaic origin of Dt. is the one thing certain in criticism, and from that we can work forwards and backwards."

The reform of Josiah in 621 B.C. was most important in the religious history of Israel, and yet it is possible to over-rate it. It is significant that his contemporary, Jeremiah, makes no allusion at all to the event, which is nowadays regarded as the turning-point in the history of the national religion. It was more drastic than Hezekiah's reform a century earlier, but both failed to leaven the nation, because imposed from without and by authority. Hence when the reforming hand was laid aside, the evil practices were resumed, as by Manasseh after Hezekiah,

and by Jehoahaz after Josiah. The later reform differed from the earlier in being animated by the influence of a *book*. And this book was Deuteronomy, which accords fully with the spirit of those reforms. Whereas the mere length of the entire Pentateuch, or even of its legislation only, forbade its being read over again and again (Kettel i. 58). The corruptions condemned in D are those assailed by the prophets mentioned. And as these make no reference to the existence of known laws concerning such practices, D, it is argued, could not be in existence. It is therefore the fruit of the combined effort of prophet and priest to cope with the existing corruptions of worship—"a great manifesto against the dominant tendencies of the time." The author is supposed to have framed existing laws in forms suitable for his purpose. It was "the re-affirmation in emphatic terms of the old national creed, and of the practical consequences which followed logically from it; the principles, which Moses had long ago proclaimed as the foundation of national well-being, must be re-asserted—an effort to realize in practice the ideals of the prophets" (Deut. lii.f). It is thus the presentation of old laws in popular form as the people's book. This book then, "in great measure the product of reflection on the failure of Hezekiah's measures" (W. R. S., 368), was, after composition, hidden in the Temple. "Hilkiah seems to have thought well to give the appearance of accident to a long preconcerted design" (Montefiore, 179; also Cheyne, Jeremiah, ch. vii.).

Matthew Henry remarks, that the Pentateuch had "a narrow turn for its life" in Josiah's time, not imagining

that then Deuteronomy came into being, and still less under such conditions! Several considerations claim careful attention here. The end justifies the means? The book is to be framed in the spirit of the Mosaic religion, and "set in a framework of fictitious antiquity!" "In their eyes there would be no immoral deceit in placing the new code-book as a whole in the mouth of Moses!" (Montfiore, 178). "I have found the book of THE LAW in the house of the Lord" said Hilkiah the high-priest (2 Kings xxii. 8). Finding is not composing, any more than when Luther took down the volume from the shelf in Erfurt, and changed the face of Europe. Other reforms preceded those of Josiah and reflect the Deut. code. The language of 2 Kings xviii. 6 concerning Hezekiah recalls Deut. x. 20, and the more merciful policy of Amaziah (2 Kings xiv. 6) the words of Deut. xxiv. 16.

Moreover, the very *acceptance* of D becomes a grave difficulty in view of its far-reaching consequences. Many interests were affected by its promulgation. The false prophets, and also the priests who were engaged at the local sanctuaries (2 Kings xxiii. 5, 8), together with the idolatrous tendencies of the people, were all vitally touched by this reformation. D as an invention, or as a late composition, must have been ever liable to protest and exposure. The opposition of priests and prophets to Jeremiah prove how difficult to palm off this code as Mosaic would have been under such conditions.

Again, as Dillmann holds, "the style of Dt. implies a long development of the art of public oratory, and is not of a character to belong to the first age of Israelitish

literature." "Certainly," says Ryle (B. D., 601), "the rich and fluent oratorical periods of Dt. belong to a period of ripe literary development, and not to the rough beginnings of a national literature." It may be well to remember the words of W. R. S.: "To associate inferior culture with the simplicity and poverty of pastoral life is totally to mistake the conditions of Eastern society. . . . In Hebrew, as in Arabic, the best writing is an unaffected transcript of the best speaking" (126). The style therefore does not necessitate a late date. May it not be true that the critical theory has not duly estimated the earlier stages of the Hebrew history? The argument cuts both ways.

That henceforth the influence of Deut. pervades all subsequent literature is self-evident. On every page does Jeremiah exhibit traces of that influence, as also Ezekiel; whereas Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, betray no such acquaintance with it. Yet can it be proved beyond question, with our limited knowledge of their inner life, that Deut. was indebted to Hosea (p. 48), and not *vice versa*? Hosea is found deeply versed in the history of the Pent., and possibly from the same source he derived that idea of love, which gives character to his conception of God. At all events where information is none too abundant, it is necessary to move with caution.

Now it is confidently asserted that "the main thread of the Book of Kings accepts the standard of Deut., but knows nothing of the Levitical legislation" (W. R. S., 109). Hence the author of Kings censures all worship at the "high places" *after* the erection of the Temple. That may be granted, but a distinction must be drawn between

the record of an event *without condemnation* of it, and the assumption that such narration regarded the Bamoth—high places—as *permissible* prior to the building of the Temple (We. 49). A reader may certainly be pardoned for regarding with wonder, deeply tinged with scepticism, the confidence which such critics as We. manifest in reading the *inner history* of a past, of which the *records are most fragmentary* ! And such a reader may also justly mete out to We. himself the measure which he metes to the sacred books and persons, especially to the Priestly Code and Chronicles. Can we fail to marvel at the confidence of such assertions as these :—“It is certain that the prophet Isaiah did not labour for the removal of the Bamoth (high places). . . . In the work of introducing Deut., Jeremiah had taken an active part. . . . The truth is, that the tabernacle is the copy, not the prototype of the temple at Jerusalem !” Verily for such statements, the premisses should have been very clearly established, and solid proof advanced.

The dating of Deut. in the VII is not free from difficulties. It suits the environment represented in it. Hence the question arises if all is a work of art and created to suit the needs of a later age. The pressing dangers at that time were the encroachments of heathenism and assimilation of foreign customs. Thus the conditions of the past are used to depict those dangers and to suggest the remedy. We are arrested first of all by a consideration of some moment in critical methods. A book must reflect its age, and events not being mentioned, if within the probable knowledge of the writer, suffice to remove it from that age. That being so, it is strange that Egypt

and Canaan occupy such place in Deut., when the forces dangerous to the safety of Judah were those of Assyria, which had a century before destroyed the sister-kingdom, and now stood as a menace to Judah itself. There remains however the alternative that it is a creation, using the past freely for the exigencies of a period centuries later.

Against that view stand the simplicity of the diction, the high tone of its teaching, and the suitability to the condition of entering upon independent national life. The experience of Moses so long and varied, both of the influence of Egypt upon Israel and of the display of its tendencies in the wilderness sojourn, must have qualified him to forecast the influence which contact with the Canaanites and other nations would exercise upon Israel. And surely it is but reasonable that mere human foresight, even apart from Divine illumination, should have foreseen the evils threatening the future of the nation. The extermination of the original inhabitants seemed an inevitable step in view of their corrupt character, and in the interests of national well-being, of religion and morality. That was a step necessary for self-protection, and most natural on entering their land. We must choose between their immediate bearing on the future of the nation then, and their being the "means of expressing indirectly the author's profound abhorrence of practices which he knew to be subversive of holiness" (Deut. xxxii. p.). Thus they have only an *ideal* value, and show the depth of the author's conviction of the danger. The destruction of Amalek for their inhuman conduct to Israel was enjoined (Exod. xvii.), and the injunction is repeated (Deut. xxv.

17ff), though Amalek had ceased to exist before Josiah's time (1 Sam. xv., xxx. 17). "That however does not affect the question," for it is cited to exhibit the fidelity of Israel in the discharge of that duty, and so an incitement to future fidelity. The alternative is the repetition of the injunction with the view of future fulfilment. Deut. xvii. 14ff is declared to be, not the anticipation but the result of the experience of kingly rule, and the degeneration of the days of Solomon is reflected there. The action of Samuel, when the people demand a king (1 Sam. viii.), proves that this law was not existent. It must be noted that the Deut. Code simply permits, but does not prescribe, monarchy. It also *follows* the rule of Judges (xvi. 18-20), who stand first among the office-bearers of the Theocracy. Now that form was tried, and the unworthy sons of Samuel destroyed the office, even as the sons of Eli terminated the priesthood of their house. Under such conditions the people sought a King to rule and guide them. Monarchy was thus a defection from Jehovah's direct rule.

Driver dwells eloquently on the *religious* value of Deut. as being very great. It is a book of national religion—of personal and so of universal religion. It is a manual intended for popular use to enforce moral and spiritual principles. Never in the history of the nation was there greater need of such a book. Religion was the bond of cohesion and the strength of Israel. And in entering Canaan, that would be put to the utmost test. That this high ideal did not permeate and hold the mind of the nation in this early period, can find its explanation exactly where its similar failure in the date postulated by

the modern criticism finds it, viz., in the tendency of man to degenerate and conform to lower ideals.

The conditions confronting the nation in entering Canaan, and changing nomadic for settled life, suffice to explain the insistence on the Central Sanctuary. Deut. xii. 8 reveals the fact that irregularity had marked the wilderness wanderings which in the land of possession would yield to the centralization of worship. This unity would serve not only religious but also political ends, for now they were not separated. Centralization of worship was the *fruit* of political centralization, according to We. (20f), and to regard the temple of Solomon as undertaken "exclusively in the interests of pure worship," independently of politics, is declared *unhistorical*. That begs a fundamental question—the criterion of what is historical. Further, in the case of Israel the political was not severed from the religious, and both ends were secured together. In the palmy days of David and Solomon we see the two converging in the erection of the Temple in the City—the centre of the Kingdom, and for a brief space the removal of all tribal barriers.

Finally, in the few decades (621-587), from the promulgation of Deut. to the collapse of national life in the captivity, there are few traces of its influence on that life. Cheyne speaks of it as a disappointment to Jeremiah, and thrust into the background in brief time! (Jerem. 107). And the question may be pressed why should its existence be granted *then* in the face of that non-observance, any more than at the close of the wilderness journeying, when at all events the changed and disturbed conditions of life explain its non-recognition? The whole situation

and character, the lofty principles and high ideals—Deuteronomy as a whole in spirit and form is certainly a greater marvel in the VIII than on the lip of Moses. No loftier ideal was ever placed before a people, and that very loftiness accounts for its failure to influence the mass. Ruder realities called away the eyes and hearts of the majority from the ideal presented to them. The Corinthian Epistle of St. Paul proves the possibility of deepest corruption existing side by side with noblest ideals.

V.

WHILE it may be admitted that JE preceded D, the question remains, What of P? This is the scientific frontier, where the war rages. Were that once settled, not only would the discussions concerning the Pentateuch, but also concerning other portions of the sacred volume (as Psalms, Chronicles), be laid at rest. The demand of We. 13 is "that the position of the Priestly Code should be fixed with reference to history." It may be well to read We.'s own words as a warning how confidence and dogmatism should not find place here, and how *entirely dependent* we are on the *Biblical writings themselves* for information. Hence the treatment of these books becomes a vital matter, involving all the questions at issue. "Almost involuntarily this argument has taken the shape of a sort of history of ordinances of worship. Rude and colourless that history must be confessed to be—a fault due to the materials, which hardly allow us to do more than mark the contrast between pre-exilic and post-exilic,

and in a secondary measure that between Deuteronomic and pre-Deuteronomic" (13). Here then a vigorous and rigorous criticism must move with caution. The Deut. legislation is an enlargement of the Book of the Covenant (p. 47). In several respects the Priestly Code is a more advanced legislation still. It presupposes the *one* sanctuary, which Dt. commanded and strove to establish. As however JE and D deal with the conditions of *settled* life, and P with the nomadic life preceding, does not that seem suitable to the circumstances? The Tabernacle was the centre of the religious life in the wilderness. D looked forward to the establishment in the land of one fixed place of sanctuary. And in view of the argument already presented (pp. 41ff), may it not be equally, if not more correct to say that the unity-idea in both D and P rests upon the elementary legislation of JE?

It is maintained that D and P exhibit *such singular differences*, that they cannot date from the same period, but must represent the usage of *two distinct periods* of the nation's history. The later has liturgical institutions not only more complex than the former, but not even mentioned or referred to by it. And the life-time of Moses was not sufficient to accommodate such changes, without giving to his work "the appearance of great irresolution and arbitrary experimentalizing" (Kittel i. 31). An alternative explanation may be mentioned—the co-existence of these two Codes—D and P—in two different circles and for distinct ends. D would thus serve as a popular, and P as a priestly handbook.

Analysis of the Priestly Code again has issued in the separation of one compact section (Lev. xvii.-xxvi.), called

the *Law of Holiness* (H). Its style and phraseology distinguish this from the larger work, in which it is incorporated. To Ezek. xl.-xlviii. it presents striking similarity, so that some have ascribed its authorship to Ezekiel. Serious obstacles exist to that conclusion, and hence it is dated earlier.

Now, concerning P it is maintained that, while Ezekiel and subsequent writings betray the influence of acquaintance with it, "the *pre-exilic* period shows no indications of the legislation as being in operation" (S. R. D., 136); nor is there any trace of its existence! This, it will be seen, is an argument from silence. And moreover, the literature to be appealed to in proof or disproof has been determined by the exigencies of a theory of religion. That KINGS should regard the history from the same standpoint as D, and CHRONICLES from that of P, certainly shows a different view in writing; but that does not necessitate the creation of facts or even the distortion of them. To exclude either because of the silence of history, it must be proved that the *purpose* of either was to *illustrate* the legislation then existing. This however is the history of religion, not of religious institutions. At no period indeed do we find the full observance of the law recorded, either before or after the exile. However, that the prophets should not appeal to a written Mosaic law, if extant, to strengthen their hands is certainly strange; but that it proves the nonexistence of such a law is refuted by the fact that the VIII century prophets evidently reflect the *historic* contents of JE, and yet do not quote its legislation in support of their strenuous contention against the idolatry of their time. It must be remembered that

the historical books would probably narrate infringements rather than observances of the laws. And these practices must not be elevated into representations of the normal condition. Argument based on the silence of history or prophecy must ever be used with caution.

Now the factors of greatest weight in determining the late date of P are, in comparison with the other codes, its view of the *place of Divine service, the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the festivals*. These four points may be briefly considered.

I. We. 34: "The assumption that worship is restricted to one single centre runs everywhere throughout the entire document." If it should be said that Lev. xvii. seems to prescribe rather than assume such a centre, We. replies that that is just an exception, as the legislation of Lev. xvii.-xxvi. forms "the transition from Deut. to the Priestly Code!" (35). When however the whole history is examined, was there *at any time after* the sojourn in the wilderness so favourable a period for the assembling of the entire nation at the door of the sanctuary?

In the wilderness however it is said the conditions were utterly unsuitable for the construction of such a building as the *Tabernacle*. It is far too costly and elaborate a structure, wrought in the most advanced style of Oriental art. The Ark found its early home in a Mosaic tent, simple in character as that of a nomad. Between that rude habitation and the Temple of Solomon, the contrast was great. To justify the latter and give it a Mosaic basis, the author of the Priestly Code glorifies the former tent—"very highly idealizes it." It is the Temple "*made portable*." For "the truth is, that the

Tabernacle is the copy, not the prototype, of the Temple at Jerusalem" (We. 37). And, as argument, it is urged that 1 Kings vi. *does not say* "that Solomon made use of the old pattern, and ordered his Tyrian workmen to follow it!" We are told however that the *idea* of it springs from the ground of history. "It is only the *embodiment* of the Tabernacle that is fancy" (50).

The description of the Tabernacle then is a fabrication, and P's trustworthiness disappears, both in the legal and historical parts. This again is not without difficulty. Idealizing side by side with unveiling the sins and follies of the leading characters is scarcely credible,—elevating the ideal and recording the want of realization. Moreover, fabrication so deliberate and flagrant cannot be consonant with any theory of Inspiration, except that of unvaracity! However, does the elaborate character of the structure constitute an impossibility? These nomads, who are gratuitously described as an ignorant, undisciplined horde, issue from one of the greatest centres of ancient arts and sciences. Have they learnt nought there? "Eighty years of life in or near the chief cities of a great empire made them keener and better educated," says Montefiore of Babylon (p. 304). Why should they not be similarly influenced by the far longer sojourn in Egypt—the rival of Babylon in civilization? (Note XVIII.).

II. In representation of the Priestly Office, P differs very much from JE and D. The earlier code has no such office; D identifies the Priests and Levites, all being priests: but P divides the two, confining the Priesthood to the house of Aaron, and making the Levites their servants. Now JE—Exod. xxiii. 14-19—does apparently

demand one sanctuary (p. 43). Does not that require ministering priests? Exod. xix. 22 takes for granted the existence of priests before any legislation, whereas Exod. xxiv. 5 mentions *young men* who sacrificed. In JE however no rules are laid down concerning their duties and privileges. In Dt. the Priests and Levites are identified. The two terms are equivalent. In P however a distinction is drawn, and though every priest must be a Levite, every Levite is not a priest. Again in Dt. the title of the priests is sons of Levi, and not sons of Aaron. No exclusive right belongs to the descendants of Aaron. The *priests* proper are those who *for the time* are officiating at the central sanctuary, whereas in the Priestly Code they constitute a *fixed minority*—the descendants of Aaron. The result of the operation of Dt., when enforced by Josiah, was to abolish the functions of the priesthood, which ministered in the *high places*—where the tribes, in their isolation from each other, and their distance from the central sanctuary, worshipped Jehovah. These Josiah defiled and removed their priests (2 Kings xxiii.). (Note XIX.). Now between Dt., with *all* Levites as priests, and P, comes in Ezek. xl.-xlviii., which represents the Levites disenfranchised for idolatry, and the priesthood confined to the sons of Zadok. Thus there were rights forfeited and persons degraded. This prepares the way for P, with its clear distinction between Aaronites and Levites, and with its High Priest crowning the hierarchy, around whom the nation stands as a religious community. But do not these same considerations make the acceptance of the Aaronic priesthood, *if post-exilic*, well-nigh impossible? Must there not be presupposed a *pre-exilic*

priesthood to account for their possession of the office? In Num. xvi. we find the rebellion of Korah against the limitation of the priesthood. The composite character of that chapter may be admitted as combining a political and ecclesiastical rebellion. The question however touches the historical character. If P (to which the Korah section belongs) be exilic or post-exilic, has it sources running far back? Is the event historical? If so the Aaronic priesthood was of Mosaic origin, and the difference between D and P must receive some other explanation. Kuenen puts the case clearly and reveals his reasons. "One hypothesis only I must exclude, viz., that of the descent of all the priests from Aaron; for it rests exclusively on the witness of the priestly legislation, and to accept it would be tantamount to acknowledging the pre-exilian origin of this legislation—an admission which, to my mind, makes any rational conception of Israel's religious development impossible" (Hibb. Lect. 78). Thus a theory of religion rules the situation. Moreover, in Dt. x. 6f we find a casual recognition of a hereditary priesthood in the house of Aaron, and this is not of P (Deut. 118ff). Schultz also maintains that Judges and Samuel mention a priesthood, who trace their lineage to Levi, "from which we may safely infer, that the sacred character of this tribe was early acknowledged" (i. 197).

As the founder of the *religious* life of the nation, Moses would naturally establish such an order, and according to ancient custom that order would be *hereditary*. The existence of such an order and of a code of ritual law follows naturally upon a sojourn in Egypt, where an

ancient priestly caste and system flourished. The points of similarity and dissimilarity reflect the Egyptian experience (Rawlinson, 288f).

A question of considerable importance here is the actual character of Ezek. xl.-xlviii. It has been termed the key to the criticism of the Old Testament. It is questionable however if it may be legitimately used in the present argument. Its interpretation is attended with much difficulty, for it combines a lively imagination with certain architectural precision. That combination proves the need of careful handling. xlvii., xlviii. suffice to dispose of its *literal* interpretation. The land as the inheritance of the tribes is divided into equal zones by straight lines from Jordan to Mediterranean. This equal distribution is most unequal. That it was ever meant to be the programme of a restored community is most improbable; for if so, no prophetic teaching was ever so completely ignored. "Such a thing," says A. B. Davidson, "was not the prophet's idea, and never came into his mind."

III. Concerning *Sacrifices*, We. holds (59) that before the Exile the opinion prevails that "the cultus is indeed of very old and sacred usage, but not a Mosaic institution." It is really pre-Mosaic. The prophetic books know nothing at all about a *ritual* Torah. (Note XX.). They have "nothing to do with cultus, but only with justice and morality" (57). The prophets preceding and including Jeremiah, are said to be antagonistic to sacrifices. Therefore no law could have prescribed them before the Exile.

Now, Jerem. vii. 21 is said to condemn sacrifice, and therefore P could not exist. But Dt. xii. 6 prescribes various sacrifices, and Jeremiah must have known that,

especially if, as We. holds (489), he took an active part in introducing Deut.! But still more strange is it to read Psalms xl. 6f, li. 16f, especially if the Psalms "are altogether the fruit of this period" (We. 501), *i.e.*, when the chief concern of Judaism was the regulation of worship. Such considerations compel us to ask, if such an interpretation of Amos v. 21, Hos. iv. 6, Isai. i. 11, Mic. vi. 6, Jer. vii. 21 is justifiable at all. Well may Bruce say that "this anti-ritualistic polemic of the prophets is not decisive as to the non-Mosaicity of the Levitical law" (235). All religion, be it orthodox or heterodox, if divorced from right conduct, would receive the same denunciation. With one accord the prophets preach against that idea of worship, which vests its worth in the quantity or even the quality of the gifts, rather than in the personal character of the offerer. The study of the Semitic religions has established the existence of sacrifices at an early date. In Egypt and Babylonia it was an ancient and elaborate system. Hence its early presence in Israel corresponds with its environment. There characterized also the Israelitish sacrificial system, the tendency from the first to insist on the *ethical* side. Through the three Codes that moral strain runs. That being so, is it necessary to postulate the experience of national calamities to educate the people as to sin, and so give rise to piacular offerings? This again relates to the history of religion. If the religion was the fruit of development and not of revelation, it must be admitted that it would require much time and incident to arrive at the idea of the holiness of God and the sin of man, with the consequent need of atonement. If revelation lay at

the base, these thoughts might be found at the beginning. Moreover, the character of P as the *priest's handbook* would account for the prominence given to ceremonial. The absence of such fulness of detail is again natural in D, the *people's handbook*, which presents high ideals in eloquent strains to move the nation's heart.

A change is also supposed to have come over the *character* as well as the number of the sacrifices in the Priestly Code. In the earlier, it was "a meal prepared in honour of the Deity, of which man partakes as God's guest" (We. 62). He adds that "it is true of course that in his offering the enlightened Hebrew saw no banquet to Jehovah; but we hardly think of the enlightened Protestant as a standard for the original character of Protestantism!" Enlightenment then measures by distance from the original character! It appears as if even in We. himself a change comes over the sacrifice. "When a sacrifice is killed, the offering consists not of the blood but of the eatable portions of the flesh (63) . . . It was the rule that only blood and fat were laid upon the altar, but the people ate the flesh" (71). That some modification was made at various crises (as at the erection of the Temple) is possible; but this evidently necessitates the existence of a Mosaic nucleus to be so modified. And the whole question turns on the relation of the codes to each other in the light of the history of religion. The incidents of the wilderness experience as recorded in Pentateuchal history illustrate the rise of various laws. Unless we place the codes at the late and widely-separated dates, thus dislocating the histories entirely, each law rises naturally to meet a

situation. These years of unique experience were fruitful in legislation. And the events vividly picture human rebellion and Divine holiness in relation to each other. From these rose naturally deeper views of sin and consequent need of Atonement.

IV. Over the *Festivals*, too, a change is said to have come, and to have affected the religion. We. 81 : "The ancient offerings were wholly of a joyous nature—a merry-making before Jehovah with music and song," &c. Hos. ix. 1; Amos v. 23, viii. 3; Isai. xxx. 32. No greater contrast could be conceived than the monotonous seriousness of the so-called Mosaic worship." In the earlier period, then, worship was feasting, and the festivals came with the seasons, partaking of their character. JE has three feasts—Exod. xxiii. 14-19—Unleavened Bread, Harvest or Firstfruits, Ingathering at the close of agricultural operations. Dt. xvi. 1-17 calls these respectively—Passover, Weeks, Tabernacles. P gives to the first and third a historical significance—the Passover, the sparing of the first-born and the Exodus, the Tabernacles their wilderness sojourn in booths (Lev. xxiii.). "No historical significance is attached in the O. T. to the Feast of Weeks; the later Jews regarded it as commemorating the delivery of the Law on Sinai" (Deut. 190). To these three are added in P four others of a religious nature.

Are agricultural associations and historical significance incompatible? The same event may be differently regarded by contemporaneous writings. Moreover, the reference to agricultural features may well post-date to some degree the association with events fresh in the memory. We. (108) will have it, however, that it must

refer to a time "when agriculture was no longer, rather than not yet." To what period would it then belong? And what *good* reason supports that? The prohibition to keep the Passover *at home* (*within thy gates*—Dt. xvi. 5) implies such practice. That is found not in JE (Exod. xxiii.), but rather in P (Exod. xii.). Which then must be the earlier? Further, the festival of the New Moon was ancient and religious, and referred to by Amos viii. 5; Hos. ii. 11; Isai. i. 13, and yet of the codes it is found only in P, even though determining the Sabbath days (cf. Schultz i. 204). Whereas if being mentioned in the historical books is the sole criterion of existence, the Feast of Tabernacles alone would be so justified. (Note XXI.).

VI.

THE centralization of the worship in one sanctuary was thus most momentous in consequence. Religious exercises were withdrawn from daily life and the home to be lodged in Jerusalem. *Worship was spiritualized as it was centralized.* Yet in view of the transference of the bulk of the literature to a post-exilic date, the spiritual life is left *without sustenance*. At once the question presents itself—What then kept the national religion from being entirely lost in the troublous times of the Judges? The history in P represents the ritual system at work in the wilderness. Deuteronomy presents the legislation of JE enlarged and modified in sermonic—historical dress, which lays hold of the nation in the great crisis of its history—when it has to face the conditions and perils of settled life in the midst of high civilization.

Its emergence from that period without being submerged in the Canaanites demands some such sustaining power.

The question now is not so much the time of *writing down* the ritual laws, but whether it is a reproduction of the past or not. Though it were granted that, as codified in final form, the laws were first promulgated in their entirety after the Exile, the real point is, if they are the creation of that period, or a re-arrangement of laws handed down from the past. Are they reproductions, or inventions? Or are they a combination of both? Our previous study will have revealed the whole question as turning upon the three codes first separated from each other, and then successively dated at great intervals—JE of the VIII, and D of the VII, and P of the V century B.C. Now if the difference between these codes issues in such a conclusion to-day, why not then? Would not the acceptance of the codes as *Mosaic* be as difficult then in view of the supposed variations, contrasts and contradictions? *The date of P is the heart of the matter.* The fitness of the Priestly Code to the circumstances of the wilderness must not be mentioned, even though one of the canons of criticism is the harmony of a book with its age and situation! Some of the laws seem suited only to such conditions. Lev. xvi.—“The culminating point of the Levitical system”—prescribes that the goat be sent into the *wilderness*—into a solitary land; iv. 11, 12, the sacrificial victims to be burned *without the camp*; xiii. 46, the lepers to be *without the camp*; xvii. 16, all animals to be slaughtered at the door of the Tabernacle, which would under settled conditions be impossible. There are other laws which would be impossible after the Exile. In the

time of Moses, the legislation *could* have been fulfilled, but *was not*; *after* the Exile the conditions of the people made it *impossible*. Granted the Mosaic element predominant, and the circumstances are in accord; granted the post-exilic date, and difficulties of very grave character arise. Why inculcate the code in such terms at all? If post-exilic why give such place to tribal divisions, and laws that have ceased to be of practical interest owing to the circumstances? Why not mention the great pilgrimages which became so important? We. does not hesitate to say that it is trimmed to suit the desert. "It has been successful, with its moveable tabernacle, its wandering camp, and other archaic details, in so concealing the true date of its composition that its many serious inconsistencies with which we know, from other sources, of Hebrew antiquity previous to the exile, are only taken as proving that it lies far beyond all known history, and on account of its enormous antiquity can hardly be brought into any connection with it" (We. 9f). All the local colour therefore is simply an artistic creation! This realistic character, which would elsewhere prove its genuineness as a desert product, is here the fruit of a vigorous imagination and facile pen. Verily, what consummate skill in word-painting, and what a vivid realistic imagination those Jews of the Exile must have possessed! It is no wonder that having discovered such rare insight and genius in that period, the Psalms and much beside of Hebrew literature should be attributed to them! Rousseau found in the Gospels such evidences of truth and power, that "the inventor would have been more wonderful than the hero!" Verily the author of P

had marvellous acumen—to conjure up in the Exile the conditions of the far-distant desert life, without ever betraying itself!

Moreover, to palm off such a document as Mosaic—in view of the representation of the Tabernacle, for example—is assuredly disingenuous. If it be replied that the end in view justified the use of the Mosaic name for laws that accorded with his views, and that that end was the consolidation of the community around the Second Temple—may it not be asked, if such legislation was not equally necessary for the First Temple? And even further, was it not required to blend the twelve tribes around the Tabernacle—not the idea, but the fact, *pace* Wellhausen? And yet again, the age being such (unless all the élite were in the confederacy), is it not surprising that it was so readily accepted? The issues of that reception were not easy and untroubled, as we learn from Ezra and Nehemiah. And Jews of that creative age would surely be as keen as the modern critic (and more deeply interested certainly) to perceive how it severely condemned the national history. They were priests, too, that wrote, and in so doing marked with shame and disgrace the long line of the priesthood! The histories were in the hands of the people. Is it not the truthfulness of the claim, that causes the code to be accepted at all? Why not take refuge in their non-existence, from the absence of reference to the codes and the observance of them, and so redeem the past from everlasting disgrace? We also remember that Hosea declares the people to be destroyed for lack of knowledge, which the Priests have failed to impart to them.

VII.

LESS extreme views are advanced by Driver, who maintains that the Priestly Code has some elements in harmony, but others in conflict with the earlier literature. This is explained by supposing "that the chief ceremonial institutions of Israel are *in their origin* of great antiquity; but that the laws respecting them were gradually developed and elaborated, and *in the shape in which they are formulated in the Priestly Code* that they belong to the exilic or early-post-exilic period." In the main it was not manufactured in the Exile. "It is based upon *pre-existing Temple usage*, and exhibits the form which that finally assumed" (Introd. 142f). Dillmann holds that P was a private document for the use of the *priests* only, and to have been written long before Deut.—*i.e.*, about 800 B.C., but using still older materials. And with him we find some of the greatest Semitic Scholars. The silence of the history about it is owing to its remaining a dead letter, until circumstances favoured the acceptance. Thus it embodies the aims and claims of the author, and sets before his age the ideals he wished to see realized. This, according to Driver, is highly artificial, because without hope of realization; and "the hypothesis that P had a latent existence, as an unrealizable priestly ideal, does not seem a probable one" (152). Ryle, however (Ezra, p. xliii.), holds that "so far as it (P) had existed in writing, it must have been held in the possession of the priests. The importance then of the religious reform initiated by Nehemiah and Ezra lay in the removal of '*the law*' from

the exclusive possession of the priest. Its publication put an end to what had been a priestly monopoly." It is noticeable too that the request for the production of the book of the law *comes from the people*, Neh. viii. 1, and testifies to a general knowledge of the existence of such a book, and Ryle conjectures that the absence of the High-priest's name from the list there given was due to resentment at an action subversive of their authority. If then P was a monopoly of the priestly circle, the absence of reference to it in D and the history is explicable. Both D and P could be divergent codes, the one facing the people and bearing upon their interests, the other the guide of the priests. Thus P would be an ideal—not a highly idealized sketch of the past to justify the present, framed by a brilliantly imaginative Jewish exile "as he sat by the rivers of Babylon" and dreamed of the past,—but an ideal projected at the beginning of the national existence, an ideal embodying great thoughts and intended to foster faith (cf. Chapter on Mosaism). Thus we find that the results of analysis are mainly twofold. On the *literary* side, the Hexateuch has been analyzed into its component parts, consisting of three great documents, each of which again is dependent on earlier sources. That earlier fragments are imbedded in the Hexateuch as in the historical books is evident. Now, concerning the existence and even exact limits of these documents we find agreement among conflicting schools. Acceptance of the general conclusions does not necessarily involve adhesion to the lines of minute demarcation which exhibit the results of critical methods. There is an excessive analysis which builds upon conclusions, and

issues in results, as precarious as minute. A. B. Davidson, criticizing Cornill's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, says truly but sarcastically: "The criticism of the Pentateuch is a great historical drama, which needs to be put upon the stage with appropriate scenery and circumstance. When performed by a company of puppets, called J E D P, with all their little ones down to J₃ and P_x, it loses its impressiveness. It will not be strange if some spectators mistake the nature of the performance, and go home with the impression that they have been witnessing a farce!" (*Critical Review*, ii. 32).

On the *historical* side we find considerable diversity of opinion. As to the *relative order* of the Book of the Covenant and the Deuteronomic Code we have agreement, and even as to the time of the *promulgation* of the latter. But concerning the order of Deut. and the Priestly Code there is serious conflict of opinion. It has not yet been demonstrated conclusively that P *follows* D, and certainly not that P dates after the Exile. Dillmann and Delitzsch are both opposed to the conclusions of the naturalistic school, the difference of date assigned to P by the two parties being as wide apart as the IX and V century B.C. Here rages the war, and the very diversity of opinion warns us, that after all to make it post-exilic, or even exilic, is only a speculative theory. "There is an area within which critics agree and a margin beyond, where there is room for difference of opinion. . . . There is an evident fallacy in arguing that because the conclusions are uncertain where the criteria are ambiguous, they are likewise uncertain where the criteria are clear" (Driver, *Contemp. Rev.*, 224). This

may be admitted, but the matters at issue in the debatable ground are far more grave than those agreed upon. The latter covers *literary* discussions ; but the former involves issues so deep and far-reaching, that the character of the Hebrew religion and the credibility of its documents are seriously called in question. The heart of the question therefore is the nature of the Hebrew religion. The conception formed concerning this determines the whole situation.

The following words of Sayce, owing to his open conflict with Higher Criticism, are at present of considerable interest. "The composite character of the Pentateuch, therefore, is only what a study of similar contemporaneous literature brought to light by modern research would lead us to expect. The 'higher' criticism of the Old Testament has thus been justified in its literary analysis of the Books of Moses. The questions involved were mainly philological, and the critic consequently had sufficient materials before him for guiding and checking his conclusions. It was only when he was compelled to step into the field of the historian, and determine the age of the several documents he had discovered, that his materials failed him, and his results became a matter of dispute" (34). Archæology therefore is not in conflict with the results of *literary*, but only with those of *historical* criticism.

TABLE OF THE CODES OF THE PENTATEUCH.

JE—The Book of the Covenant—Exodus xx.-xxiii., xxxiv.

Primitive legislation for the conditions of settled life.

Corresponds to the practice of the nation up to the Early Monarchy.

D—The Deuteronomic Code—Deut. xii.-xxvi.

Expansion of JE to establish one central sanctuary. Accepted as State-Law by Josiah 621 B.C.

P—The Priestly or Levitical Legislation—Exod.-Levit.-Num.

Assumes Central Sanctuary and contains Elaborate Ritual.

These three Codes with the histories attached were formed into THE PENTATEUCH, and adopted as National Law by the Jews under Ezra, 444 B.C.

ABSTRACT OF THE ARGUMENT OF THE
GRAF-WELLHAUSEN THEORY.

- 1—Three different Codes in the Pent. embodying legislation differing in character, though having points of affinity.
- 2—The history of the nation—Judg., Sam., Kings, Chron.—reveal the existence or non-existence of these Codes.
- 3—JE corresponds to Judg., Sam.: Kings shows influence of D: Chron. has evidence of P.
- 4—A Code is not existent when there is no trace of it in the history. Thus P must be later than D; and D than JE.
- 5—Between D and P stands legislation of Ezek. xl.-xlviii. Therefore P must be Exilic or Post-Exilic.
- 6—The development of the Hebrew Religion may be seen in the growth of the Legislation.

A STUDY IN CRITICAL METHODS.

"Our increased acquaintance with the religious literature of the ancient world has emphasized the supremacy of the Old Testament Scriptures. They still stand in lonely eminence, as they have always stood; immeasurably superior to all else of their kind."

ILLINGWORTH.

"Revelation, and revelation alone has taught us; and it is from the teaching of revelation that men have obtained the very knowledge which some now use to show that there was no need of revelation."

TEMPLE.

"It is scarcely too much to say that misconceived reverence has been one of the chief impediments in the way of true ideas respecting both Scripture and the Christ, and therefore respecting the God whom both of them reveal. For centuries we have settled in our own minds, and (one might almost say) have dictated to the Almighty what kind of a Bible He *must* have given us, what kind of a Christ He *must* have sent us, instead of carefully and patiently investigating the actual characteristics of the inspired writings which have come down to us, and of the Incarnate Son, whom they make known to us."

PLUMMER.

A STUDY IN CRITICAL METHODS.

I.

THE problem to be discussed therefore is not the analysis of the Pent. into its three documents, or the admission that there are marked differences between them, or even that they exhibit variations touching the same matters; but whether these admissions demand the acceptance of the critical conclusions concerning the relation of these documents to the history of the people and of their religion. In other words, what is the value of the books as records of the *religious history* of the Jews?

The difference between the Traditional and Critical views *in their extreme form* is startling; but of both there are modified forms not so widely separated. The theory, received by the Christian Church from the Jewish, assigns the several books to the great men of their respective periods. This has been modified, or *rectified*, as the result of analytical studies. Now, if the existence of these documents be granted, what of their dates? Can the Mosaic authorship of the Pent. be retained at all; and if not, what becomes of its credibility and trustworthiness? As post-dating the composition of the various writings, manifestly and considerably increases the distance between the events and the records; and as the preservation of the material would largely depend on oral tradition, has that material suffered to any degree in

the course of transmission? Has the Jewish nation been an exception among all others, and refrained from magnifying its heroes and embellishing its past? Finally, and above all, what is the true character of the religion of the Hebrews? Must it be regarded as one *among*, or as one *apart* from, all other religions?

Now, as preliminary to the discussion of such questions, several considerations demand attention. A distinction must be drawn between the *primary* stage—the first draft or elementary form—of a book and its *final* completed form. Though the Higher Criticism should make the Pent. a mosaic rather than of Mosaic origin—about Moses rather than by him, yet it is not thereby emptied entirely of Mosaic contents. The *Traditional* view made Ezra an Editor, and in one form that he wrote or *re*-wrote the entire O. T. If the Mosaic authorship be maintained, it must be acknowledged that some later hand has added occasional notes of varied character—of time, place, antiquarian interest, &c. So also the *Critical* view claims to discover signs of Editorial activity and compilation throughout the O. T. Possibly in its Exile the deported nation, having seen in the calamities which had befallen City and Temple the peril of losing its precious literary treasures, addressed itself to the task of preserving and editing the records of the past. Thus would their faith be supported in the sad days when “by the rivers of Babylon, there they sat down, yea, they wept, when they remembered Zion, and preferred Jerusalem above their chief joy.” The permanent and final form must be distinguished therefore from the earlier and elementary form of the writings.

Again, an *event* must be separated from the *record of it*. "The date, at which an event or institution is first mentioned in writing, must not be confused with that at which it occurred or originated; in the early stages of a nation's history, the memory of the past is preserved habitually by oral tradition; and the Jews, long after they were possessed of a literature, were still apt to depend much upon tradition" (S. R. D., 125). Thus the event and its record may be widely parted in time. Does this however necessitate the conclusion of Schultz (i.16f)—"No book can be a trustworthy authority as to events from which, *without any intervening records*, it stands hundreds of years apart. Thus the stories about pre-Mosaic times are authorities as to religion as it was *in the age of their authors*; and the Book of Chronicles, though *without value* for an inquiry into the religion of *Hezekiah's time*, *not to speak of David's*, is one of the most important original authorities for understanding the state of religion at the *close of the Persian period*." (The italicizing is ours.) One thing restrains such a hasty issue, which entirely wrecks the historical credibility. The intervening period may be most effectually bridged by Tradition, which in the East depends on a memory of singular strength and retentiveness, and which is ever well exercised. (Note XXII.) Criticism does not do justice to Tradition, either in its witness to the books as a whole, or in its function as to the contents of the several parts. Hence, even if not committed contemporaneously to writing, must we *necessarily* question the Patriarchal stories? Moreover, the *possibility* even of intervening *records* need not be yielded in view of recent Archæological discoveries. And

though, as a general rule, the early stages of the history of nations are wrapped in myth and legend, emerging gradually thence to the historic stage, this is not *of itself* a conclusive proof that the early history of Israel may not form an exception. Indeed, the early pages of that history are distinguished from similar periods of other nations by a sanity, honesty, and simplicity, which depict with all the signs of verisimilitude the various characters and events.

Both the *Conservative wing* of the Critical School and the *Rectified* wing of the Traditional unite in surrendering the Mosaic authorship of the *entire* Pent. Both presuppose the Mosaic origin of the *chief part*, which in the course of the nation's history has been modified in view of existing needs. Nowhere does the Pentateuch itself claim to be the work of Moses *in its entirety*; nor is it anywhere ascribed even to his age. The "Law of Moses" is frequently used, but its limits are never defined. Moses is expressly said to have written certain portions, such as Exod. xvii. 14, Num. xxxiii. 1-49 in history, and Exod. xxi.-xxiii. (cf. xxiv. 7, xxxiv. 27), Deut. xxxi. 9 in law. The question then frames itself—Are we to infer that his literary activity was limited to the parts so marked? Or do they imply the entire Pent.? Which is the more probable conclusion? (Note XXIII.). Further, it is noticeable that, with the single exception of Josh. v. 1, all the narratives up to Ezra use the third, and not the first person. Indeed, all the earlier books are anonymous, and the titles prefixed to them, whatever their intrinsic value, must not be regarded as an original and integral part of them. But that this *proves* the Pent.

non-Mosaic for that reason only, such compositions as the Commentaries of Cæsar sufficiently refute. The Pentateuch, though containing much history, has from its chief feature been entitled the "LAW." These two terms however—Law and Pentateuch—were not identical ideas and used interchangeably, *till after the Exile*. "This is a fact of supreme importance. Its consideration is of itself well adapted to raise us above scruples of conscience with respect to the criticism of the Pent., and to deliver us from all sorts of inveterate prejudices. The perception that the Pent. *contains* the Law, but is not identical with it, and that it subsequently received this name as though it were so, exercises a liberative effect" (Delitzsch, Gen. 50, 53 pp.). If that be granted, then the expression "Law of Moses" does not imply of necessity that he wrote the *entire* Pentateuch, or even that its legislation is the unmodified product of his mind. The Mosaic *origin* of the legislation may be held apart from the Mosaic authorship of the *entire* Pent. And the term *Moses* may be used for it in the same sense as Ruth, Judges, Samuel, Kings are employed, *i.e.*, not of authorship, but as being the leading character. (Note XXIV.).

It may well be asked if our LORD's references to "*Moses*" really demand more than that it should be regarded as the *current designation* of the Pentateuch. Where has Christ, or indeed any of His Apostles, either implicitly or explicitly, maintained the Mosaic authorship of the *entire* Pent.? We have no trace of a question bearing upon the authorship, genuineness, or canonicity of any O.T. writing being submitted to Him by friend or foe. This is surprising when we find that the contents of the

Hebrew Canon were not yet definitely settled, but rather that some writings were still subjected to much discussion among the learned Rabbis. Indeed, Cheyne does not hesitate to say—"It is the attitude of the Master towards the Jewish Law which justifies Christian Critics in their free but reverent attitude towards the historical documents of the church, among which those of the Old and the New Testament stand supreme" (J. R. L., 35). Moreover, in view of the fragmentary character of our materials, and the scanty references of Christ to the Old Test. (Note XXV.), should not reverence for His Divine Person forbid our invoking His authority to settle this question? An explicit statement from Him, had it been preserved, would finally dispose of this, or of any other question, for His followers in all ages. However, is it not simply natural that in speaking to His contemporaries, He should, on this matter as on others (cf. Matt v. 45), use their terms and methods of speech in order to be understood by them? It is striking that we have no recorded claim of Omniscience on His part, nor even exhibition of it. This suggests the infinite mystery of the Incarnation, whereby the Divine Son was "in all points made like unto his brethren" (Heb. ii. 17). Nowhere is the ignorance of man more absolutely helpless than in the presence of the declared ignorance of Christ—Mark xiii. 32—"neither the Son." "That He was ever completely ignorant of aught else, or that He was ignorant on this point at any other time, are inferences for which we have no warrant, and which we make at our peril" (Liddon, 467). That may be true, but the isolated text confronts us with all the mystery and difficulty ever

attending the Person of the God-Man. And may not reverence be bordering perilously upon presumption in limiting the ignorance as in limiting the knowledge of Jesus? Limitation of knowledge and liability to error must not be regarded as convertible terms. Moreover, is not limiting the not-knowing of Christ to tamper with His "advance in wisdom" (Luke ii. 52, cf. R.V. L.ii. 40), and thereby to mutilate the reality of His perfect manhood? He being "VERY GOD OF VERY GOD," condescended not to know. "The Incarnation involves both the self-expression and the self-limitation of God" (Gore, 161). This touches not the infallibility of Jesus. It does touch, and deeply too, the fallibility of our knowledge here. Hence we submit that in the absence of explicit statement from Himself, or concerning Him in Scripture, it is advisable, imperative even, to abstain from recklessly invoking His authority to settle this question.

II.

THE recognition of the composite character of the Pent. removes some difficulties, even if it raises others of grave character. "If—to use the words of W. R. Smith—old narratives are imbedded in later compilations, and groups of old laws are overlaid by ordinances of comparatively recent date" (Proleg. vii.), the presence side by side of tokens of great antiquity and of allusion to *late* historical events, of legislation suited to very different ages and

conditions of society, of repetitions and insertions, is at once explained. For it is one of the characteristics of the Hebrew—as of Semitic literature generally, to preserve and collocate varying elements, without, after the modern fashion, concealing the joints. “The Biblical historians reproduce with fidelity traditions differing from each other, and abstain on principle from forced harmonistic interpretations” (Delitzsch). Thus for example we find side by side in the same book, without any explanation, passages derogatory as well as eulogistic of its heroes. This feature finds explanation if different traditions have been collocated. Still the admission of that must not be forced into a denial of the possibility of the contemporaneousness—or at least temporal proximity—of the different traditions, which lie at the base of the history. They differ because one aspect has caught the one ear, and another the other. Divergent traditions may be, and often are, concurrent. If that be so, the variations between the earlier historians (Sam.-Kings) and the later (Chronicles) *need not* be regarded as falsifications. There are other possibilities more consonant with the character of a sacred historian, such as access to other and different sources, as well as another standpoint. The one may embody a number of histories preserved in the *priestly* circles, whereas the other may put forth those current in *prophetic* circles. Presumably therefore the admission of composite structure, *i.e.*, the recognition of the results of literary analysis—does not also necessitate the acceptance of the *post-dating* of the component parts.

Driver maintains that the only obstacle to the acceptance of the conclusions of criticism is the supposition,

baseless in his opinion, that they conflict with the requirements of the Christian faith. Ellicott, on the other hand, holds that those conclusions are not consistent with a sincere belief in the Inspiration, or even in the trustworthiness of several of the Old Test. writings. These two declarations are in evident conflict, nor are they the views of the extreme schools, but of those standing nearest to each other. It cannot be concealed that the discussions now prevalent have intimate relation to the doctrine of INSPIRATION. However, both Scripture itself and the Councils of the Church, even when clearly asserting the fact, have abstained from defining the nature of Inspiration. While declaring that "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 21), and that "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable. . . ." (2 Tim. iii. 16), it says not a word as to *any special form of Inspiration*. When the leaders of the Protestant Reformation confronted the Infallibility arrogated by Rome, Scripture was their tower of defence. Their views however were singularly liberal. Gradually the lines closed in and became more stringent, until the doctrine of Verbal Inspiration is accepted, even so far as to include that of the *Hebrew vowel-points*! (Note XXVI.). Apart from the *certain possession of the original text*, such a theory offers no safety, but creates the necessity of defending the text against any *apparent* collision between the word of Scripture and the most assured modern discoveries. No theory can be regarded as satisfactory, which does not take full cognizance of the facts. The theory must suit the facts, and the facts illustrate and support the theory. Belief in Inspiration is intuitive. The same power which

gave being to the faculties of man must be able also to influence their exercise. But the question will still remain—How will that power work? Our theory must be framed *after* observation of the data before us (*a posteriori*) and not *before* (*a priori*). Such is the only truly scientific method.

Now, as has been seen (p. 23f), the Bible presents the feature of unity combined with abundant diversity. All forms of human literature are laid under tribute, and every human talent consecrated to serve religion. That very diversity proves that, whatever may be the exact nature of Inspiration, its influence does not destroy the individuality of the sacred writer, but rather gives it ample play. It did not dehumanize the writer but made him more human. The great Alexandrian father, Origen, thought the influence of the Divine Spirit made the minds of the prophets clearer, and insisted on the individuality of the writers as moulding their expressions. Further, the language of Luke i. 1f, suffices to prove, that Inspiration does not spare the writer all patient and careful research. The entire passivity of the human powers finds no countenance in Scripture itself. Mental effort and sustained, persistent enquiry are ever the conditions. Over that toil, the more arduous the more fully the weightiness of the issues was realized, presided the Holy Spirit, illumining and informing human powers to serve Divine purposes. Careful observance of the Biblical language itself forbids any dogmatic conclusions. The Revelation of God was given in many *fragments* and in many *modes* under the Old Dispensation (Heb. i. 1), suggesting by that *fragmentariness* an imperfect, and by its *manifoldness* a provisional charac-

ter. In any case the warning of Westcott is most opportune: "The student must not approach the inquiry with the assumption—sanctioned though it may have been by traditional use,—that God must have taught His people, and us through His people, in one particular way. He must not presumptuously stake the inspiration and Divine authority of the Old Test. on any foregone conclusion as to the method and shape, in which the records have come down to us" (Hebrews, p. 493).

The exact measure of the human and Divine influence in the Bible lies beyond human power to define; and yet the presence of both, while creating the problem, presents the key to the phenomena, not of the Book only, but also of the History. A distorted view on either side vitiates the perspective in both. It is perilous to ignore either. The human element must not be eliminated as by the Mechanical theory of Inspiration, nor must the Divine be under-rated as by the Subjective theory. All heresies spring from the want of duly recognizing the presence and influence of these two in the Written as in the Personal Word. And as the Church in the earlier centuries fought its way through bitter conflict to a due appreciation of the Person of its Lord as GOD-MAN; so now it must win for itself the richness of the human element in the *Written Word*.

The Traditional and Critical views face each other and tend towards mutual modification. The modern view of many of the Biblical characters differs widely from the older, because of the prominence given to the human element—an insistence upon the human to the neglect of the Divine. Possibly the older also tended to

emphasize one side to the disadvantage of the other, and that the better qualities of some of the characters did not receive due prominence. This however has been amply redressed by the critical view, as is exemplified by Cornill's treatment of Saul and Ahab on the one hand, and of Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha on the other. Cheyne bases critical reconstruction "on the combined use of the two sister faculties—common sense and imagination" (J. R. L., 4). The latter can be of unquestioned service in calling up the circumstances and making vivid the conditions of a past age, but it must ever be subject to the guiding influence of the former. A due recognition of the complexity of human motives and characters, and of the manifold opportunities afforded by the varying conditions of human society for the development and display of different and even of apparently contradictory features, should lead to the conclusion that different portraiture of the same persons are not necessarily to be distinguished as fact *versus* fiction, or as accurate record *versus* idealization, or earlier *versus* later records. The same person may in different circumstances reveal himself almost as two different and even contradictory characters. They may be contemporaneous, not necessarily earlier and later editions, and especially with the later tampering with the earlier in the interest of a theory. The conditions of human nature and life have always to be recognized. By the assertion of the progressive character of revelation, *i.e.*, the interaction of the human and Divine, the Church of the age of Tertullian defended the Old Test. against the attacks upon the moral quality of some of the acts and persons detailed in it. God was

taking man as he was to make him better—accommodating His methods to the capacities of men.

The presence of the human element therefore demands recognition of the conditions of human authorship; the presence of the Divine impresses upon it certain characteristic features. The revelation is God entering into human history—influencing human minds and lives. To man He speaks in man's language and in forms intelligible to man. The prominence of the human as a weighty factor must never be forgotten. It is there to limit and condition by its own nature the revelation of God.

III.

IF then no theory of Inspiration may prejudice our mode of study, how can the trustworthiness of the Scriptures be tested? "By independent witnesses." But whence can they be summoned? ARCHÆOLOGY is declared to be able to refute the conclusions of modern criticism (cf. p. 11). Conder says—"In an age of destructive criticism, it seems to me to present the most important weapon that can be placed in the hands of those who desire, without seeking to support any particular theory, to arrive at truth concerning the ancient history of Palestine and of the Hebrew people" (p. x.). (Note XXVII.). It is necessary however to apprehend clearly the exact contribution of Archæology. It is quite possible to magnify as well as to minimize the results. Sayce has written: "We have dug up Homer; we shall yet dig up the Bible." What shall be, it is hazardous to prophesy; what has been done is somewhat clearer. Certainly the

last half-century has supplied a marvellous record of Eastern discoveries. The romance of the excavator's spade has fully rivalled that of any novelist's pen. The ancient Oriental world is rising from its long silent grave, and throwing a flood of light on many points of Biblical interest. The Old Testament history is seen to be but a part, though most important, of general Oriental history. Its events find place in the larger field. Therefore, where the Oriental and Hebrew records meet and run side by side, they contribute to mutual corroboration. Yet we are made aware of the difficulty of treading with perfect confidence. If the work of excavation be prosaic, that of deciphering the Inscriptions unearthed is found more exhilarating, and demands that the activity of a too vigorous imagination should be held in check. Of the measure of uncertainty still attending this study, the discovery of Prof. Flinders Petrie in Egypt in 1895 affords an edifying illustration. (Note XXVIII.). The brief inscription then uncovered, is remarkable as being the first unmistakable occurrence of the name—Israel—in the records of Egypt. That, if we may judge from the violent controversy that ensued, seems the only certain thing. The disagreement of the Archæologists was patent, and touched all points except one—the name.

However, sufficient has been established to throw light on the early period and origins of Hebrew national history. The discovery of the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets in 1887 was of signal importance. These show that in the XV century B.C. the civilization of Babylonia spread over the lands of Palestine and Egypt. "These, according to Conder (p. 6), are "the most important

historical records ever found in connection with the Bible," and "most fully confirm the historical statements of the Book of Joshua, and prove the antiquity of civilization in Assyria and Palestine." The prevalence of the Babylonian tongue explains the ease with which the Hebrew Patriarchs were able to move among such widely parted peoples. Light is thrown on the state of Canaan prior to Moses and reveals considerable literary development long established. Oriental research has demonstrated the early and wide-spread use of the art of writing. It must suffice us however to learn from the Archæologist that the Patriarchs lived in an age of wide literary culture, and moved both in their original home in the East and in their subsequent migrations, *among civilized nations*. The Canaanites and Amorites were not mere barbarians, but were possessed of a high civilization and of literature of much value, even *before* the Israelites entered the land. Yet it is singular that no contemporary, or even later, monumental inscriptions bearing on their early history have been left by Israel. Indeed Palestine has next to nothing of *pre-exilic Hebrew inscriptions*. Conder suggests that the absence of bas-reliefs and stone monuments *west* of Jordan (while the east has altars and stones in great numbers) is due to the vigorous execution of the Law by Hezekiah or Josiah, so that "in Judæa and Samaria all such monuments appear to have been destroyed, if they existed" (p. 78). The monumental history of Palestine begins in the reign of Ahab (890 B.C.) with the Moabite stone, which records the revolt of Mecha against Israel (2 Kings iii. 4f). The language closely resembles the Hebrew of the Bible, but

is not identical with it. It establishes the fact that Hebrew writing was fully developed a century before Amos, the first writing prophet, appears. Of pure Hebrew we have the first example in the Siloam Inscription, dating about 700 B.C., and of like character with the language of the contemporary prophet—Isaiah.

Now these considerations clearly tend to arrest any hasty inference. This early prevalence of the art of writing and of literary culture scarcely justifies the strong words of Sayce, that "not only Moses could have written the Pent., but that it would have been something like a miracle if he had not done so." Further, this does not touch the real question at issue. Ignorance of the art of writing is not the premiss upon which the present criticism of the Pent. depends. "The antiquity of writing," says Driver, "was known long before the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets were discovered" (158n.). On the other hand, it must lead us to regard with suspicion the bias which seeks to transfer to the *post-exilic* period the greater part, and the best, of Israelitish literature. The later writings of Cheyne display an evident bias in that direction. This leads to an undue depreciation of the religious life of the Hebrews, when enjoying a national existence, and to regard all before VIII B.C. at furthest as obscure and conjectural. Archæology is pushing back the evidences of culture among the Semitic peoples—the pioneers of civilization—to a past bewildering in distance. The civilization of Babylonia is supposed to reach back as far as 6000 or 7000 B.C. ! Advanced criticism exercises itself to bring down the great bulk of the Old Test. to a very late period. If the Traditional theory depreciated

unduly the centuries between the two Testaments—the blank sheet or centuries of silence ; they have been amply avenged and made voiceful, eclipsing all the glories of the past. The recent volume of Cheyne—*Jewish Religious life after the Exile*—is a perfect specimen of the latter, and exhibits the ease with which an “imaginative criticism” can reconstruct history, so as to illustrate the demands of a theory.

Schrader's *Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Test.* affords an interesting mine of evidence to the trustworthiness of the Hebrew records. When the Assyrian power entered upon the field of Hebrew history, the coincidences of Bible and Inscriptions multiply, and the one ratifies the other. Has a single instance been yet discovered, in which the Hebrew records have been found *antedating* later events? One cheering indication deserves to be noted, namely, that both Ægyptologists and Assyriologists have introduced a very wholesome reaction in favour of upholding the validity of Old Test. history. “The views of several eminent Ægyptologists on the subject of the antiquity and historic value of considerable portions of the Pent. are well known” (Pref. to Schrader, p. xx.f). If, therefore, the history is demonstrated to be trustworthy, *where the sacred and profane records meet*, the inference is but just, that the same credibility marks the Bible, where the other records fail. And it may be fairly objected to, that an imaginative criticism should revel in tearing it to shreds in the interests of a theory.

Moreover, is it probable that the age of David and Solomon, so illustrious both internally and in its foreign relations, should have produced no literature, or next to

none? While other nations around it delighted in recording their history—their conquests and their buildings—why not Israel? Was she keen only to catch the evil habits and to emulate the vices of her neighbours, but not to be influenced by her cultured environment? The migration of Abraham, the descent into Egypt, the Exodus, the wilderness sojourn, the Conquest—all these were great events, such as are wont to awaken the spirit of authorship. Kautzsch, who dates the Exodus in 1320 B.C., and the Song of Deborah about 1250, remarks concerning that poem of “priceless worth,” that it is “genuine, splendid poetry, which enables us to conjecture how much that was equally important has vanished without leaving a trace” (p. 4). He prizes it more for the insight it gives into the historical, and particularly the religious conditions of that far-off century than for its æsthetic value. “Jotham’s Fable (Judg. ix. 8ff) is of quite another character, but an equally striking and indubitably genuine product of the premonarchic time. The technical structure of the fable is here found in such perfection, and imbued with so fine a sarcasm, as again to suggest the conjecture, that this form of composition must have been long and diligently cultivated” (p. 5).

Both these compositions then presuppose long exercise of literary craft. And we have the testimony of Prof. Jebb, that “there can be no literature in any proper sense of the word without writing. For literature implies fixed form; and though memory may do great feats, a merely oral tradition cannot guarantee fixed form.” It is not without significance that *writing* is first mentioned in the Bible *after the Exodus*—the birth of the nation—(Exod. xvii. 14,

xxxiv. 27), and following its departure from that land of marvellous culture, where they had spent so many long years. It is therefore *not impossible* that records may have been written and preserved, from which the history was composed.

Now the Higher Criticism moves along two distinct lines—the literary and the historical. Literary questions lie beyond the province of Archæology; but upon the historical it may and does throw light. It must be borne in mind, however, that the points of contact between the sacred record and the monuments are those of *external* events. The test applied to the documents, after their separation by literary analysis, is that of religious conception; and the basis of comparison presupposes that between the religion of Israel and that of other Semites there is no difference. Driver maintains, after closely following the course of Archæological research, that “the idea that the monuments furnish a refutation of the general critical position, is a pure illusion.” The defeats which the critics suffer are purely imaginary, and due to misrepresentations of the critical views, or baseless inferences from the monuments (xviii. 4, 158f pp.). On the *literary* side Sayce holds that “the literary foundation, upon which the history and religion of Israel rested, is, in its present form, a composite work. The fact is fully in accordance with the teachings of Oriental Archæology” (p. 31, cf. Hommel, pp. 19ff; Schrader, Pref. p. xiif). It is well, therefore, to recognize the exact limits and service of that science. While establishing the credibility of the Biblical history, it tends to arrest the process of disintegration of the historical books, and so to preserve the picture of religion they contain.

IV.

WE., commenting on the opposition offered to the Grafian theory, remarks: "The firemen never came near the spot where the conflagration raged; for it is only within the region of religious antiquities and dominant religious ideas, that the controversy can be brought to a definite issue" (p. 12). The test of the three-fold element in the Pent. must be "the inner development of the history of Israel, so far as that is known to us by trustworthy testimonies from independent sources." Yes, that is the question—What are the independent sources?

The field of study is confined, as we have seen, to the Old Test. itself. Our knowledge of the early life of the Hebrews must be derived from this volume, which is the subject of discussion. In ancient and classical Hebrew we have no literature beyond the Scriptures themselves. Hence the scantiness of the literature, in view of the immense periods it professes to cover, must create a difficulty and forbid hasty and dogmatic conclusions. The range of the literature is so extensive that its parts become too small for a *history of the language* to contribute much to the solution of the question. Cheyne says therefore "that the linguistic argument is unfortunately not often of primary importance in the Higher Criticism of the Old Test." This is evidenced at once by the various dates which scholars assign to the *same* documents. Clearly the language cannot be a final test of the various writings.

Further, the fact that the Old Test. formerly consisted

only of Consonants, and that the Vowel-points were added by the scholars, called *Massoretes*, in the *Christian Era*, after Hebrew had become a *dead* language, demonstrates that any archaic forms which could have told a tale, have been obliterated, so that the lapse of centuries witnesses no change in the language. One grammar applies to the whole Old Test., though its literature extends over a millennium. The real change in Hebrew style begins in the books of Nehemiah and Malachi. "Aramaisms and other marks of lateness are abundant only in works written after this date—Esther, Chron., Eccles., &c." (S. R. D., 156). The books of the Old Test. have, each of them, words and expressions peculiar to itself. The Pent., owing to its greater length and the technical character of its chief matter, contains of necessity a large number of peculiar words. To prove the antiquity of such words the early age of the book containing them must be postulated; or *vice versa* the words must be assumed as ancient to prove the antiquity of the book! No argument, therefore, as to the early or late date of a book can be founded on the occurrence of peculiar words. To challenge a word on that score as "not-Hebrew," and due to foreign influences, is not justified. "The cry of 'Unhebräisch'—not Hebrew—is becoming too customary," says A. B. Davidson. "The critical gamekeepers who raise it are comparable only to gamekeepers of another sort, who shoot down every creature of God, which does not show the familiar grey of the grouse!" We declared of his opponents that they were prone to use the language in argument "as if it were soft wax." That the documents are of the same Hebrew character cannot be

pressed on either side solely. The similarity of diction can be represented from the standpoint of either contemporaneous composition, or of the effects of final editing, but neither successfully to the exclusion of the other. The very scanty extent of the Hebrew literature in our possession renders any inferences based on linguistic considerations most precarious. (Note XXIX.).

The matter rests therefore with the internal evidence of the Book itself. So the problems arose at first, and so too must the solution be sought. The rival theories must be put to the test of explaining the religious history of the Jewish nation. Now that history is known to us solely from the Old Testament in its three sections. (Note X.). The Codes of the first section, or Pent., are taken and compared in detail with the second division (as will have been seen from pp. 40ff). As the argument depends almost entirely on *internal* evidence, and that none too copious because extended over so wide a field, there arises the danger of yielding to the influence of bias or theory—of allowing what is only probable and speculative to have too great weight. “Often,” said Mr. Gladstone, “does a critic bring to the book he examines the conclusion which he believes that he has drawn from it.” The critic starts with a certain theory of religion, its origin and development, and arranges the various writings in accord therewith; or *vice versa* he first arranges the documents and thence frames his theory of religion; and sometimes he will do both with such wonderful rapidity as even to deceive himself. It is often laid to the charge of the Traditional School that they are dominated by certain conceptions and by fear of the consequences of accepting the new

conclusions. An interesting passage from We. (p. 11), a few words of which we italicize, may be noted here: "Passages were quoted (against Graf) from Amos and Hosea as implying an acquaintance with the Priestly Code, but they were not such as could make any impression on those who were *already persuaded that the latter was the more recent!*" It may be laid down as a fundamental axiom *that the theory to be proved must certainly not be the standard of trustworthiness.* To start with a theory which also assumes a certain conclusion, and then to accept as trustworthy what complies with that, or dismiss as unhistorical what proves untractable, is certainly not scientific. The function of true criticism is ever to *test* all things—to accept what comes for criticism as it actually presents itself. Criticism inspired by a vigorous imagination can execute wonderful feats, but the question remains—Is it scientific?

W. R. Smith says: "Many parts of the Old Test. are practically a sealed book, even to thoughtful people, because they have not the key to the interpretation of that wonderful book" (Proleg. vii.). The Modern theory holds the key, and consequently the Traditional fails to explain the history. This cannot unlock the treasure-house, and its contents lie out of reach. But that begs the whole question. The Critical School holds that if the Pent. be of the hand or age of Moses, the Prophets cannot be explained at all; but if we place the Prophets first, then the Law follows naturally. Hence we may not say—Law and Prophets so as to indicate the order of succession, but rather Prophets and Law. *The conditions of prophetic activity issue in the Law, rather than reflect or*

presuppose it. "No one will deny," says Kuenen, "that our conception of Israel's religious history entirely depends on our verdict on the Old Test." The question therefore rises—On what does *that* depend? Again it is fundamental that every book should bear the impress of the time and circumstances in which it was produced. It must correspond with its environment. *The book and the age must reflect each other.* Erasmus was the great pioneer of interpreting from the writer's own age and point of view. This constitutes one great service rendered by Modern Criticism to the Church. It has recalled it to the duty of regarding each writing as in and of its age. The older view tended to isolate the record or message and estimate it according to its permanent value. The later theory falls little short often of creating an environment—idealization—on the lines of a preconceived theory. The soundness of the above axiom of criticism is manifest, and invaluable will be its service, if duly safeguarded. Our ignorance of the religious condition of those early ages must enter into the discussion *as a limiting factor*, and a distinction must be drawn between what is plausible and what is even probable. Without that it may err, and the results be inconsequent. "Explaining things away is a process that has no place in fair historical inquiry, though unfortunately it has long played a great part in Biblical interpretation" (O. T. J. C., 421). Explaining away is not scientific, says the *new*; the *old* may well reply, nor is cutting away. No element can be eliminated, either from prejudgment or because difficult. A preconceived theory, or philosophical presupposition of any kind whatsoever, is an arbitrary tribunal to which to

summon either the text or meaning of Scripture. The method ceases to be scientific when based upon, or actuated by, hostility to the supernatural. A theory must not be allowed to indulge in the luxury of ridding itself of recalcitrant passages. "It is only when a verse, besides interrupting the argument seems to reflect a historical situation later than the prophet's day that we can be sure it is not his own" (G. A. Smith, xii., i. 142; cf. Note XXX.). Another danger waylays the critical method—that of regarding one part of the Hebrew Canon as intended to fully illustrate the other (Note X.). The second was *not designed* to represent the Laws of the first in operation. Such an idea misses the true character of the Old Test. Scriptures, which were manifestly not intended to be a history of Institutions, but of Religion. This at once precludes the idea of laying inordinate stress on the *Silence of Scripture*. It does not profess to give an *exhaustive* record at all. In fact long and important periods are passed over in silence—periods of great formative influence—such as the prolonged sojourn in Egypt (Exod. i. 7f); the wilderness wandering between Num. xix. and xx.; as well as the long interval of 58 years between Ezra vi. and vii. In view of this, should silence concerning the observance of the Laws be interpreted as proofs of non-existence; and then an *occasional* reference to such observances be regarded as interpolations?

A further safeguard is the recognition of the presence of Revelation, and that *it has a history*, *i.e.*, the recognition of the PROGRESS OF REVELATION. This again must be distinguished from the idea of the *Evolution of Religion*. The whole character of the Religion is thus raised.

V.

THESE three weapons have seen much service in the hands of Modern Criticism—*The Silence of Scripture, Correspondence with Environment, and the History of Religion*. When carefully handled, they are most valuable weapons. Nevertheless, the corruption of the best is ever the worst, and the misuse of the true is ever fraught with danger. On these three lines then the question may be further tested. It is imperative, however, to distinguish between principles and the application of them, between methods and results. Old Test. Criticism is still far distant from its final stage, and fuller investigation may correct hasty inferences. At the same time the *methods* may be tested as being in actual operation. The relation between the Codes and the Prophetical books may be examined. Serious, indeed, and full of grave consequence are the words of W. R. S. (O. T. J. C. 233)—that *the one fault*, which the Traditional theory of the Old Test. has, is that “The standard, which it applies to the history of Israel, is not that of the contemporary historical records, and the account, which it gives of the work of the prophets, is not consistent with the writings of the prophets themselves.” Verily, that *one fault* is amply sufficient to condemn any theory. Can it be a true indictment?

The argument from Silence, according to We. 365, “is nothing more or less than the universally valid method of historical investigation.” That will be readily conceded, especially when duly safeguarded. That perception and judgment are absolutely necessary for fair use of it was

fully shown by Lightfoot in his memorable discussion with the author of Supernatural Religion. In a sphere lying beyond the frontiers of Criticism, the air may prove exhilarating to the imagination, and marvellous feats be performed!

The SILENCE OF SCRIPTURE is, indeed, on many points singularly striking and presents much difficulty. *Neither does the History record the observance, nor do the Prophets condemn the non-observance of the Laws of Worship.* On the contrary, the history records a course of conduct in direct violation of it. The indulgence in idolatrous practices and non-observance of the festivals and ceremonials, which mark the history to the Captivity, run in the very teeth of the Law. "Between the entry into Canaan and the earlier Kings," says Ellicott, "there is no trace of observance of the regulations of the Mosaic Law, even in the most stringent particulars, as appearing before the Lord in the three great festivals." Yet this was a provision of the Earliest Code—the Book of the Covenant" (Exod. xxiii. 14ff)! The Historical books have no allusion to the observance of the *Sabbath*, and little evidence of it at all before the Exile. The word is not found from Deut. v. to 2 Kings iv. 23. *Circumcision* was neglected in the wilderness, though dating from Abraham's time and the sign of the Covenant (Gen. xvii. 10), and though made a law for the nation (Exod. xii. 44, 48, Lev. xii. 3). These texts occur in P, but Exod. iv. 24 (JE) mentions it, and Josh. v. 5 (D) records both the omission and renewal of it. Deut. x. 16, xxx. 6, refer to the *spiritualized* conception—heart, not flesh. Afterwards it is scarcely ever mentioned, except figuratively by Jerem. iv. 4, ix. 25. That silence

argues non-observance may be doubted from the use of the term "uncircumcized"—Judg., Sam., Isai., Jerem., Ezek.—to distinguish those not of Israel. It had become by the time of the Judges a custom so deeply rooted in the national religion as to be a source of pride to the Israelite, and a reason for despising the "uncircumcized" (cf. Schultz, i. 194; cf. Note XXXI.). Again, the references to the *Passover*, after the Pent., are but few—Josh. v. 10f, 2 Kings xxiii. 21f, 2 Chron. xxx.-xxxv., Ezra vi. 19; so also with regard to *Tabernacles*, we have only 2 Chron. viii. 13, Ezra iii. 4; of the Feast of Weeks, or *Pentecost*, we have no record! Yet these are the great annual pilgrimage feasts, and found in JE! Does this absence of record of necessity prove non-observance, and that again establish non-existence? We find Cheyne (J.R.L. 9) arguing that after the Return there was a genuine religious spirit in the poor remnant of Judaism, which had persistently offered, however scantily and irregularly, the sacrifices "on the sacred site almost throughout the sad years of the past," and adding, "*The silence of our scanty documents is no evidence to the contrary.*" May not the same be maintained concerning the *pre-exilic* documents? Moreover, the fallacy of the argument—no record, no observance, not existing—is manifest from the following considerations. *The Day of Atonement* was the "culminating institution of the Levitical system,—the highest atoning ceremony of the year—the highest exercise of the mediatorial office of the High Priest." It is found only in the Priestly Code (Exod. xxx. 10, Lev. xvi, xxiii. 27, Num. xxix. 7), which criticism dates in the V B.C. Now if that be accepted, one would naturally

expect to find record of its observance in *later* writings. "The sacrificial ordinances as regards their positive contents are no less completely ignored by antiquity, than they are scrupulously followed by the post-exilian time. . . . Even in 444 B.C., the year of the publication of the Pentateuch by Ezra, the great day of atonement has not yet come into force. This *testimonium e silentio* is enough; down to that date the great day of the Priestly Code (now introduced for the first time) had not existed" (We. 82, 111). Dillmann, on the other hand, finds the introduction of such a feast as the Day of Atonement into the ancient book of the Mosaic Laws at so late a date to be "absolutely incredible." But even if that be granted, there remains the fact, that there is no trace of its observance up to 37 B.C. Thus we find the *chief institution* of P neglected for four centuries, and that when the age was saturated with the spirit of that Code, or rather of which it is the exponent! Does non-observance *now* prove non-existence? Clearly then silence does *not* prove non-existence. Hence Driver says: "Non-observance of a law does not necessarily imply its non-existence;" but he adds: "still when men, who should know of it, make no attempt to enforce it, but disregard it without explanation or excuse, the inference is justifiable." However, to justify such an inference, the Scriptures must be proved to have been *designed to represent exhaustively* the ideas, customs and movements of the age. The record of observance proves the existence of a law, but not necessarily the opposite. Nor is the inference justifiable, that a law can only be in existence when it can be demonstrated as appropriate to

that time, and to have been enforced. On the other hand it is certainly strange, that if the Pent. Laws were of Moses, and known to bear the weight of his authority, they did not vitally affect the history of the nation from the beginning. Ought not the period depicted by Judges, Samuel, and Kings to have been very different? In the great struggle of the prophets of the VIII century with false worship, why do they not appeal to the Law as condemning the practices of the people? If the reply be made that the Law was not known at the founding of the national history, but stands at the close of a long period, reflecting the experience gained therein, as Deut. of the failure of past reforms and of the teaching of the prophets, we are met by this difficulty. Jeremiah was of the time of Josiah, and his prophetic activity (626-586) preceded, as well as followed, the discovery of the Law in the Temple. While however the tone of his teaching is in full sympathy with the reforms of the young monarch, he makes no mention of that reformation or of the great discovery which is the touchstone of Criticism! Should the silence argument be pressed to signify that neither took place? We. 489, it is true, remarks that Jeremiah had taken an active part in introducing Deut. Can it be then that modesty dictates his silence? In laying stress on this kind of argument, the ordinary laws of evidence and common sense must have control. Verily silence is eloquent oft-times, but imagination must not people the void at will. The fact that the records have preserved no protest against it does not surely warrant the conclusion, that "even Elijah himself was indifferent to the worship of the golden calves" (Proph. 109). Was

not the introduction of Baal worship, and the erection of a house and altar for that god in Samaria (1 Kings xvi. 31f), sufficient to account for the all-absorbing devotion of the prophet to Jehovah-worship? The crisis was acute enough to monopolize the moral energies of Elijah. It may suffice also to cause us to hesitate from asserting that Amos, "like Elijah and Elisha, lets the golden calves pass without a word of protest" (Cheyne on Hosea, p. 31). The argument from silence may be regarded as a valid method of investigation when due regard be had to its exact limits. Too great a stress must not be put upon it, else it may prove itself "a bruised reed, whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it."

VI.

THE two other elements—the history of religion and the correspondence of a writing to its age—are naturally bound up together and react upon each other. The ordinary laws of good sense must come into play in dealing with the matter—both in conceiving of the religion itself, and then in using that conception to determine the dates of the books. The writings themselves must be interrogated fairly, not with prejudice in favour of either old or modern theory of religion; then *from the books themselves* must a theory of religion be formed which will best explain the circumstances. Then it may justly be enquired if that theory is possible, always of course maintaining the fundamental premiss of Revelation.

Again, the harmony of a book with its age is a vital question. Upon a writing which refuses to fall in with its environment, some suspicion must rest. Yet the question arises—How can the age of a book be fixed? By internal evidence for the most part. The insecurity of that argument has been already dwelt upon. “A flood of light has often been poured on an obscure passage,” says Cheyne (J. R. L. 4), “by happy intuitions, which spring from sympathy with an author, and a sense of what he can and what he cannot have said.” These happy intuitions also aid in reconstructing history, “from a sedulously trained imaginative sense of antiquity supported by a large command of facts.” It is extremely hazardous to allow even such a *sense* as this to *determine the facts*. This amounts to creating a situation, and using that afterwards as a test of the writings. That reasoning is surely vicious, which from portions of a book builds up an environment, and then cuts off the rest as excrescences. To argue again that, because an utterance of a prophet suits a period, it must of necessity belong to it, is certainly too strong. Equally so the conclusion that a high and spiritual teaching demands *late times*. History can tell us of men who have thought thoughts, and lived lives in advance of their age. The conditions of Oriental life in every age afford illustrations of high elevated sentiments linked to lives far different in character.

Such considerations may serve a good purpose in our further discussion. The key to the whole problem lies in the relation of the above two elements—the history of religion and the suitability of a writing to its age. The problem, therefore, may be presented thus. Place the

complete Law in the *initial* stage of the nation's life, and it becomes difficult to account for the subsequent history, especially for the Prophets. If the Pent. came from Moses, why is the history such as it is? Why do not the Prophets charge the nation with the breach of a *known Mosaic Law*? Again, does not the nation as reflected in the Prophetic writings occupy a *lower level of religious intelligence and attainment* than that of the Law, or of the Psalms? Is not the conclusion then inevitable, that Prophecy preceded the Law, and that the Psalms were later than both?

We demur to that conclusion for three reasons. The Law *may* have been issued as an *ideal*, with which were combined rules and observances towards realizing it. The ideal—pure worship and pure life—was too exalted, as was clearly demonstrated by the incident of the Golden Calf in the early stage of the national life. A more extended ritual became necessary as means to that end, and to present to the people in symbolic forms the great truths of religion. Again, the language of the Prophets must not be strained to include *every* individual in the nation, and to imply the utter and total demoralization of the entire people. The methods of the Apostolic writers, as well as of the pulpit of every age, suffice to exclude so exhaustive and sweeping a condemnation.

Further, the above conclusion begs the fundamental question—the true conception of the history of religion. The history of Israel, and therefore of their writings, is the history of religion. The Old Test. in its present form, whenever completed and however much edited, presents a certain conception of that history. This may not

harmonize with the result of our gleanings in the field of COMPARATIVE RELIGION. It may however be well to remember, that "The Science of religions is at present in the position of all young sciences." The mass of facts to be dealt with—the historic and symbolic documents, the institutions and customs, observation of the religious ideas and practices of uncivilized races—presents a study most complex in character. It has not full command of its materials, and exhibits much variety in interpreting them. Its *established* generalizations are few, and need "careful scrutiny before they can become premisses, from which further conclusions may be drawn" (Illingworth, 165). What fruit may yet be garnered by the prosecution of this study can scarcely be estimated, or what light it will throw on the early religious history and institutions of Israel. It must be recognized that it is unscientific to employ such comparison simply for the end of *reducing* all religions, Israel included, to one common plane. Kuenen, after sketching his "standpoint in a single stroke,—for us the Israelitish is one of those (principal) religions, nothing less, but also nothing more,"—admits that to so include the Israelitish and the Christian among the principal religions is only possible, "if there exist no specific difference between these two and all the other forms of religion" (i. 5). "Aye, there's the rub!" Is there a specific difference, or not? Kuenen (i. 11) answers the question: "Without a shadow of doubt then we deny the existence of such a difference;" and maintains that such can only be held to exist by overlooking on the one hand the errors and defects of the religion of Israel, and having no eye for the excellencies of other religions. The

Science of Comparative Religion has demonstrated the fact of the universality of religion, and also that the character of the deity served is reflected in the character of the people. Now the problem may be put thus. In the midst of other Semitic nations, holding most degraded ideas of deity, and indulging in correspondingly immoral practices, stands one nation, whose whole history displays a constant tendency to degenerate, and yet whose religious ideas stand aloof from all around. Their environment and inclinations show how impossible it was that the ethical monotheistic conception of God should proceed *from themselves*. Unless the Old Test. be torn to shreds, it must be admitted that *from the beginning* there is the consciousness that Jehovah has a certain character, and demands from His people a like rule of action. The idea of Holiness pervades the conception of God from the first. It is true that it did not then possess the *life* of the nation. If there is no specific difference, that national consciousness of the character of Jehovah is an unfathomable mystery. (Note XXXII.).

The Evolution theory regards religion as development in a straight line from the lowest forms to the higher and more elevated. Such is the spirit of the age and its governing thought. It is regarded as intrinsically reasonable that the Hebrew religion passed very gradually from the simplest and most elementary form up to the highest and fully developed. Starting from fetishism, it ascended through polytheism to monolatry, and finally arrived at monotheism. However, the theory which makes religion *start* from fetishism or totemism, awaits corroboration. "They assume a theory of development,

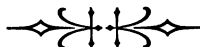
which has not a single historical instance to verify it," says Fairbairn; and to Pfeiderer, it is "as much wanting in evidence as psychologically impossible." The question bears upon the course of religious thought. Was the earliest and elementary form a monotheism, or does that form the summit of development? The modern view is in conflict with the older. The former starting from nature-worship arrived at length at the idea of Jehovah as Holy, Just and Good, demanding like qualities of His followers. The mode of serving Him also develops concurrently with the conception of His character. The Biblical theory of religion posits as the beginning what forms the end of the other. Revelation of Jehovah—Be ye holy for I am holy—lies at the foundation of the nation's history, which unfolds the attitude of the people to the truth entrusted to them. Whatever difficulties attend the Traditional theory, it has a consistency as well as the Critical. That of the latter has called into exercise the free excision of many passages and sections. Still the difficulties are not cleared. *Why did this religion alone move upwards?* How was the independence of Israel made secure? Why and how did it resist the influence of the Semitic religions? Ever yielding to the seductions of idolatrous associations, Israel was restrained by some power from becoming submerged by them. What was that force? The older theory postulates REVELATION as the starting point. Upon the exalted conception thus given to men, the tendency to degeneracy operates. The hold upon spiritual religion ever tends to relax. Abram opens a new chapter in human history in reviving the original idea. The Exodus revives again the life which

seemed dead in Egypt. The revelation of Jehovah is entrusted to a *chosen nation*, isolated in the world, rather than *from* it. The purity of that revelation had to contend with the influence of the unspirituality of human nature and with the seductive power of a corrupt environment. Ideal and real ever confront and contradict each other.

“ The permanent interest of Israel's history for mankind lies in the fact that in the history a supreme moral personality is unveiled ” (Ottley, 66). That unveiling is of necessity gradual, owing to the nature and character of both parties. Development there must be in the unveiling of Jehovah and in the apprehension of Him by man. The relation of Jehovah to the nation was the historical foundation of their national existence, and the gradual appreciation of that relation the history of religion. “ That the religion of Israel, though subject in its growth to historical conditions, is not to be explained as arising solely out of them, is not, in other words, to be treated as a natural product of the genius of the people, appears besides from the fact that it stands from the beginning above the ordinary level that was reached by the nation generally: throughout its history the people are represented as needing to be taught by others, as declining from truth by which they ought to have been guided, as falling short of the ideal propounded to them. There is no ground to suppose that, apart from the special illumination vouchsafed to the great teachers who originated, or sustained, the principles of its faith, the religious history of Israel would have differed materially from that of the kindred nations by which it was surrounded ” (Serm. 137f).

Such is the Bible's own theory of the religion contained in it. Its history is that of religion. It is idle therefore to object to the controlling influence of such an idea. History must be written from some standpoint. On some thread you must string your beads of facts, and the question is if it be strong enough to hold them together. The author of 2 Kings xvii. gives his theory: a covenant has been broken and the issues proved calamitous. Such is not the view of Montefiore (84): "The sin of Jeroboam is to him (the author of Kings) the central motive and cause of the entire tragedy which ended in the ruin of Israel. But in the eyes of Jeroboam and his contemporaries there was no sin and no idolatry." May not a motive be suspected in the suggestion of Montefiore (84) that the revolt of Jeroboam partook "of a religious character—sprang from religious conservatism?" The same author deems 1 Kings xvi. 25f "an invention of the historian to blacken the memory of Ahab's father and predecessor!" At all events 1 Kings is impartial and spares not Judah's King (xiv. 22ff), but *that is not an invention!* (87). *Prima facie*, however, the narrative bears the impress of authenticity. It is not probable that later writers *idealizing* a long previous age would depict its characters—the heroes of its nation—as falling below the standard of their own day. It is consummate art or true narrative. Chronicles is confessedly, in present form, of late date, and is discredited by the Critical School as an authority for the time it *describes*, and valuable only as giving the ideas of its time of *composition*. It is true that it is history written from a priestly and ecclesiastical position, and professedly based on the authorities and sources

mentioned in it. We. is never weary of expressing his contempt of the author and his book as utterly untrustworthy. On the other hand, Dillmann says that "Chronicles is thoroughly reliable history, being drawn from the official records of the Israelites" by a priestly author, who dwells upon ecclesiastical matters, and writes under the influence of his age and his own mind and purpose, though not to the detriment of accuracy.



PROPHETS AND PROPHETISM.

"The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?"

AMOS.

"And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send?
Then said I, Here am I. And he said, Go."

ISAIAH.

"No prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake
from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost."

PETER.

"In all the religious history of mankind there is nothing that can
be compared to the prophetic order in Israel."

A. B. DAVIDSON.

"The most unique and powerful manifestation to which a
national life ever gave birth."

KITTEL.

"God, when He makes the prophet, does not un-make the man."

LOCKE.

"We now recognize that the primary mission of a prophet is to
his age. He is a preacher of righteousness to the men of his day."

ILLINGWORTH.

"It was this—that God is irrevocably on the side of right—
which made the great Hebrew leaders, and the Psalmists after them,
take it for granted that their cause was the cause of God, and that
the Lord of Hosts was with them."

LUX MUNDI.

PROPHETS AND PROPHETISM.

I.

THE prophetic writings form "the Key to all the chief problems of Old Test. study, and without understanding them, no one can hope to make real progress in the knowledge of the Old Test. as a whole. Here the whole movements of Israel's spiritual life can be closely studied in the writings of the men who directed them" (W. R. S., 17, 19).

The importance of such a study will therefore be at once conceded, and especially so as some of the strongest arguments for the late date of the Priestly legislation are based on these writings. It is suggestive too that with the appearance of *written* prophecies, the information in the Book of Kings becomes less full, but our knowledge of the *internal* condition of Israel becomes far more copious. Moreover, from the substantial accord of the Critical and Traditional views concerning the works of the prophets which are extant, and whose genuineness and authenticity are not questioned, we have a safe basis whence to enter on the study. Not that all contention is absent from consideration of the prophetic remains. The only part of the Hebrew Canon where anonymousness is entirely excluded is the Prophetic. But while Tradition knows no anonymous prophetic book, criticism regards

the title attached to these books as *too inclusive*, and that the productions of different prophetic teachers have been grouped under one name for other reasons than identity of authorship. Further, these writings have not escaped the active operation of the Critical Scissors, ever on the alert to discover and *deal with* interpolated passages, or expressions, or words. The Pentateuch, having been arranged in order of development—JE, D, P—by aid of the Historical and Prophetic writings, is now used as an instrument to determine the date and genuineness of the Prophecies, in part or as a whole. Such a proceeding is surely arbitrary. It is maintained by Cheyne that, when these exercises of Criticism have taken place, “Amos will become one of the most wonderful figures in the Biblical portrait gallery—Hosea, like Amos, gains by this more thorough criticism—the next scholar who takes up Micah from Stade’s point of view, and does not shrink from the labour of putting down all the data, will have a fine opportunity of distinguishing himself!” (Proph. xvii. ff). Verily the bearing of all this (if admitted) upon the history of the Israelitish religion will be far from slight! The cautious words of Driver offer a striking contrast (Introd., p. 306f), and those of G. A. Smith deserve careful consideration. (Note XXX.). The Critical school cannot be regarded as entirely free from the influence of imagination in depicting an age; and then using that age so conceived as the test of what is, or is not genuine. (Note XXXIII.).

One of the great services which modern criticism has rendered to the Church is to enforce a closer study of the Prophets, and to make them more real and living. The

stage, on which they played their part, is vividly pourtrayed, so that they move, act, and speak *in the midst of their age* as living personalities. This study, inaugurated by the vivid imagination and keen penetration of Ewald, has proved most fruitful. And as prophets are found at the great crises of national history, guiding it with counsel and reproof, the life and work of these men becomes in truth the history of revelation, *i.e.*, of Israel's religion.

One danger, however, of fastening the gaze too intently on the prophet as the *preacher of his day*, living with his fellows, reflecting as well as moulding their thoughts, is to lose the *fore-teller* in the *forth-teller*. He is *of his age* with an eye keen to see its sins and evils, and with a heart eager to remedy its errors. *Yet the limits of his own day were not the horizon of his vision.* He saw beyond it. The past has possibly given too great prominence to the predictive element, and set value on a book in proportion as its predictions were traceable to fulfilment. "Prophecy," said Butler (272), "is nothing but the history of events before they come to pass." This view becomes involved in grave difficulties, not the least being that the service of the Prophet *to his own age* is much depreciated, if not nullified. His eye was on the needs of his own generation, not on the data of future apologists, and the value of the prophetic writings must not be restricted to evidential purposes. The present age has amply redressed the wrong of the past. The spirit of the present demands that the evidences of Christianity should not come from prophecy or miracles merely as manifestations of the supernatural (cf. T. C. Edwards on 1 Cor. i. 22). Stress

is now laid on the *tone* of their teaching, not on their foresight. Yet the danger faces us here of depreciating the spiritual insight and foresight of the *pre-exilic prophets*. "The predictive element in the prophecies is not so great as perhaps is sometimes supposed. . . . Yet there remain undoubted and remarkable examples of true predictions" (Serm. 107, 109). "Primarily they preached; incidentally they prophesied; because they proclaimed a law which operates in ever-widening circles" (Illingworth, 177). *These men claim to foretell*. They claim more than mere human foresight, and even more than the result of a general conviction that, as a righteous God governs the world, it must eventually go well with the good and ill with the wicked. Kuenen defines prophecy, as "the result of the high moral and religious character attained by the prophets. . . . which was itself the slowly matured growth of ages." Herein is nothing *sui generis*. This merely shifts the marvellous endowment to a marvellous man, who has somehow outstripped his age! Then we ask—Why and how? The prophets themselves claim the power of predicting the future (Amos iii. 7, v. 27, vii. 11), and that claim was evidently acknowledged by their own contemporaries. Their strong moral character also fully supports the truth of their contention. Evidently to credit them with mere foresight and keen observation does not meet the situation. W. R. S. remarks that the danger from Assyria "was visible to the most ordinary political insight, and what requires explanation is, not so much that Amos was aware of it, as that the rulers and people of Israel were so utterly blind to the impending doom" (p. 131). That blindness

he charges to the fanatical faith in the power of Jehovah to deliver His own people, and His assured will to do so in view of their religious zeal (Amos v. 21ff). It is true that the prophets were keenly observant of the movements of nations, and as they rose and fell traced therein the purposes of Jehovah. Still, what raised them above their contemporaries in power to read the signs of the times? Whence had they that clear survey of the situation and firm, broad grasp of the great forces at work? Amos vi. 14 speaks of the raising of a nation to afflict Israel throughout its entire dominions, though its present was most successful; and yet in sixteen years the first captivity of Israel went to Assyria (734 B.C.), and in twenty-eight (722 B.C.) the Kingdom was entirely overthrown! It is striking that the account which the several prophets give of themselves is uniform. Their office is none of their own seeking—in fact they seem to have yielded to it *under overpowering pressure*. The hand of the Lord was upon them. The word of the Lord came unto them (Am. iii. 8; Hos. i. 1, iv. 1; Isa. vi.; Mic. i. 1; Jer. i. 4f; Ezek. i. 1, iii. 14ff, &c.). The declared consciousness of these prophets bars the way to the conclusion, that their predictions were merely human foresight. So then, unless we ignore that constant assertion of the Divine hand upon them, *we are face to face with the supernatural*.

Careful study of the prophetic writings, especially in chronological order, from Amos the first onwards, discloses abundant variety combined with unanimity on great fundamental principles. The volume of their revelation deepens and gradually expands as the waters of Ezekiel's vision (ch. xlvii.). Prophecy among the

Hebrews is not an isolated, or even an occasional phenomenon, but an ever-present power. Their history is that of prophecy, which therefore itself has a history, and is an organic growth. Yet here again the limits of our knowledge concerning the prophets and their age must make themselves felt. The mental history of each prophet would offer an interesting study. How far did one build upon the work of another, and how much that was new and peculiar did each contribute to the volume of Divine Truth? "In the narrative of Kings, the history of religion remains an absolute blank during the century with which we are particularly concerned," *i.e.*, VIII (W. R. S., 199). *The prophecies themselves are the sole evidence.* The first occurrence of a word, or a thought, therefore cannot be pressed to prove its coinage by that writer; nor does the use of the same word or thought by two or more writers show them to be of the same age. And still less so when we remember that our prophecies are but the condensed notes of a far more extensive teaching. Our ignorance ought therefore to preserve us from hasty and perverse conclusions. One thing however is self-evident—the individuality of the speaker is stamped on his message, and the variety of form is due to the character of the prophet and to the circumstances of his age. One of the grave defects of the modern theory is that it does not do *full justice* to the personal element, either in the prophet or in the nation. It savours too much of a mechanical character, and is dominated by the rigidity of a theory. God does not destroy the man in using him, but the Divine influence moves into greater characteristic activity all his powers. The *man* is there, and the

personal equation determines the dress of the message. The recognition of the presence of a vivid imagination is necessary to a due appreciation of the true meaning of the prophetic language. "All prophets proclaim one eternal principle, and so far are alike; but as it is their duty to apply the principle to the special conditions of their age, they must needs differ as much as those conditions differ. As the prophet, whose prophecy is new in substance, is no prophet, but a deceiver, so the prophet whose prophecy is old in form is no prophet, but a plagiarist" (*Ecce. Homo.*, 20). The prophetic state demands the recognition of the presence and interaction of the Human and Divine.

Standing then on the great date of the Higher Criticism—the *one sure foundation*—the promulgation of Deuteronomy 621 B.C., we have behind us the literary remains of the prophetic activity of at least four great men—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah. The oracles of these four are admittedly safe bases for the study of the internal and religious condition of Israel during their times, even as the four great Pauline Epistles—1 and 2 Cor., Gal., Rom. serve for the investigation of Earliest Christianity. The study of these four fully illustrates the above statements. The Spirit of God evidently nourishes individuality. The life of that spirit intensifies the varieties of disposition and character. The call to this office came to men endowed with certain bent of mind and sensitiveness to certain aspects of truth. Some truths are common to all, but apprehended in a form dictated by the nature of the prophet, and presented in a dress suited to the conditions of the age. Amos dwells on the right-

eousness of Jehovah; Hosea on His mercy; Isaiah on His sovereignty and wisdom; Micah on His righteous indignation. Each lays stress on that feature, which has laid deepest hold on himself. Thus the message is directed to the needs of the age as interpreted by the prophet. It is the fruit of the genius of the prophet in view of the circumstances under the guiding influence of the Spirit of God. God thus spake "in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners" (Heb. i. 1). Hence it follows that these writings are of deepest interest, *not as inverted, but as mirrored history*. As the Pauline Epistles illustrate the condition of the churches addressed, revealing their virtues and vices, especially the latter, because meant to correct them; so also the prophecies mirror their times. *They reflect their age suggestively, not exhaustively*. One common feature of their teaching is that it maketh for righteousness. It ever bears on moral action. This ethical vein runs through pre-exilic and post-exilic prophets alike, and this consideration touches fundamental questions. This determines the attitude of the prophet towards ritualism—religiousness as a cloak over immorality. This explains his strong condemnation of certain sins, and silence with regard to others. Condemnatory speech on one point does not involve approbatory silence on others. Surely in the VIII B.C., as in the XIX A.D., the preacher may deal with "the crying sin," or "the burning question," of his day, without such misinterpretation. One evil catches the eye of one, another that of another. It becomes necessary to bear in mind that our sole witnesses here are the prophecies themselves; and as they seek the reformation of the

nation, the sins calling for such correction are necessarily prominent. There are other features in the national life, both good and bad, which are passed over in silence.

II.

WRITTEN PROPHECY rises in a period of commanding interest in the history of both Kingdoms. Two Kings of great military skill and administrative ability 'sat on the two thrones. Jeroboam II ruled over the Northern Kingdom for forty eventful years (783-743). The long and severe oppression of Syria had well-nigh crushed Israel (2 Kings x. 32; xiii. 3, 7, 22). Joash, the father of Jeroboam II, had revived to some degree the fallen fortunes of his realm (2 Kings xiii. 23-25); but by the hand of the son the dominions were widely extended (xiv. 23-28). "The reign of Jeroboam II was the culminating point in the history of the Northern Kingdom" (S. R. D., 314). Light is thrown upon these successes by the Assyrian monuments, which represent that power as having weakened Syria, the great foe of Israel. The geographical position of the Northern Kingdom brought it into contact with the movements of the great nations of the ancient world. There lay Syria close at hand, and beyond to the East was the power destined to influence deeply the history of both the Hebrew Kingdoms. This involved the greater activity, literary and political, of the North. That period of great prosperity was most eventful in every respect. During the past sixty years—between Elisha and Amos—

we have no historical picture of the religious condition of Israel or Judah. That of the former, however, is clearly reflected in two great writers—Amos and Hosea, both of whom address themselves to Israel. The internal state is deplorable. Prosperity has brought gross evils in its train, and the popular religion had no power to check them. Civilization was sapped by the prevalent forces. The rights of God and man were alike ignored. Amos depicts the luxury of the nobility (vi. 4ff) and their injustice (ii. 6f, iii. 10, v. 11, viii. 4f), the women inciting the men to evil (iv. 1). Yet withal there was great religiousness (iv. 4f, v. 21). The same dark colours form the picture of Hosea, but the gross evils have been made still more gross by circumstances. Jeroboam II passed away, and anarchy followed, so that within twenty years, the prosperity had vanished and the Kingdom itself fallen (722 B.C.). They were years of great upheaval and ruin. The end hastened on. Amos is the father of written prophecy. His home was in Tekoa, where he pastured his flock in the wilderness of Judæa. That life developed his powers of observation and imprinted its features on his book. An eye he had to see the danger threatening his flock, and courage to act promptly and fearlessly. His periodical visits to the great fairs at centres, where business and pleasure were combined with religion and revelry, afforded him insight into the character of Israel as well as of other nations. Prosperity prevailed, but the air was charged with danger. On Amos came the hand of Jehovah (iii. 8, vii. 15), and the impending judgment drives him to speech (iii. 6-11, iv. 12, vi. 1). The righteousness of Jehovah is His overwhelming thought. This

excludes the possibility of recognizing other deities. The unity of God is a fact above all others, and His sway is over all. Hence the evil-doing of *all men* cannot go unpunished (i. 3-ii. 16), but above all must the sin of Israel be visited with judgment (iii. 1-2, iv. 11-13). Exceptional privileges involve grave responsibilities. The bond between God and Israel is moral and dependent upon the fulfilment of its obligations. With such a message of judgment Amos burst in upon the revelry in Bethel—the King's Sanctuary (vii. 13). The act was bold and daring—a Judæan in Israel. It is one of the most striking scenes in the Old Test. How grand is the sweep of the man of the desert—the Righteous Jehovah meting out impartial judgment to all nations! It is the language, however, of one who stands aloof from men, indignant against wrong, but regarding the evils from without, not from within. HOSEA, on the contrary, is a man of deep emotion as Amos of intellect. He too speaks to the Northern Kingdom, but as a member of it. The evil and misery agonize his heart, and great love and indignation fill his utterances. No book in the O. T. exceeds his in interest. He was well-versed in the history of his people, and from its perusal had conceived the idea of the relation between Jehovah and the nation as loving and personal. His family history gave form and intense reality to his message. The first three chapters are probably a thrilling revelation of that history, and unfold its tragic side. The early morn of his wedded life was full of love and brightness, but was eclipsed by the unfaithfulness of his loved, but erring, wife. Henceforth his self-imposed task was to win her back from her adulteries to an appreciation of his

love, and the reawakening of her own. Love and infidelity, love and restoration with repentance are the facts of his early history. The tragedy of that hearth was a miniature of the larger tragedy of national history. The swooping of the Assyrian power on Israel roused Amos to try to avert the doom. The ruins of his home and its repair became the message to Hosea—Israel, the betrothed of Jehovah, ever abandoning Him (ii. 7ff, 19ff). Under that conception of the marriage-bond, he pictures the relationship between Jehovah and Israel dating from the Exodus (xii. 9, xiii. 4). That tie has been violated by sin, and captivity must follow, wherein separated from her old adulterous, idolatrous associations, the Divine Husband will, with infinite tenderness, woo and win back her love again. That covenant-bond is the master thought, and hence the relation of Jehovah and His people is all-important. His *declared* attitude therefore towards idolatry must be clearer and more definite than that of Amos. The righteous son of the desert is indignant at the unrighteousness; the shepherd at the luxury, which hardens the heart to acts of callous injustice; the honest servant of the Holy Jehovah at the cant, which concealed gross iniquities under the cloak of religious services! Hosea, whose ideal of wedded life has been shattered, spells out its glories from its ruins. The bride of Jehovah must have no other lover. To serve any other is infidelity, harlotry, and sin. Cornill says that “Hosea is the *first* to demand worship of God without *images*?” That verily begs a fundamental question—the Mosaic origin of the Decalogue, as well as the historicity and true character of the Pre-Mosaic period. W. R. S. (175): “There is no

feature in Hosea's prophecy which distinguishes him from earlier prophets so sharply as his attitude to the golden calves, the local symbols of Jehovah adored in the Northern sanctuaries. Elijah and Elisha had no quarrel with the traditional worship of their nation. Even Amos never speaks in condemnation of the calves. But in Hosea's teaching, they suddenly appear as the very root of Israel's sin and misery." The whole question is one of *speech* and *declared* attitude. Our sole witnesses are the Scriptures themselves, and it is manifestly unjust to assume that silence means approbation. No prophet can be proved to have unburdened himself of *all his thoughts*. The great evil of his day caught his eye from his own mental standpoint. Hosea is certainly the *first writing prophet* to attack idolatry, and that because of his idea of the relation of God to His people. For the same reason he condemns the calfworship (viii. 6. x. 6, xiii. 1).

Both these prophets—a native of the South and a native of the North—in addressing Israel are at one on fundamental questions—the unity and righteousness of Jehovah; the obligation of the nation to righteousness; the insufficiency of mere ritual, however multiplied, to constitute true service of God; the doom of the sinful nation, but the survival of a faithful remnant to form the nucleus of a nobler community. Both also unite in attributing the national beginning to the supreme act of Jehovah in bringing them up out of Egypt; and both exhibit acquaintance with the national history as recorded in the Pent. The significance of this will be seen, when it is recognized that they hail from the different Kingdoms. The cry first raised by Amos that the nation,

though Jehovah's, must perish at the hand of Jehovah Himself because of its sins, was taken up by Hosea and the following prophets, together with its corollary that ceremonial diligence could never make atonement for moral laxity. The principle which lies at the base of this, viz., that privileges do not reduce or remove, but rather increase responsibility, was not new. Its use was more direct and public. Jehovah had cut off the house of Eli from the priesthood, and that of Saul from the royal power; and upon David himself as well as upon Solomon had His hand been heavy for their offences. The history of the past is in perfect harmony with the prophetic teaching, that every one that nameth the name of the Lord must depart from unrighteousness, or else against the nation, though bearing His name, Jehovah must appear for judgment.

III.

THE history of the Southern Kingdom shows at this time the same success and prosperity. Under the continued dynasty of David, however, it had not been subject to the violent changes which shook the sister kingdom. Contemporary with Jeroboam II was Uzziah (or Azariah) who extended the dominions of Judah to the far South and West, and strengthened its borders with towers. His long reign (778-740) was momentous in results, and great strides were made in the arts of civilization. Judah now entered into the field of the nations around, and was thereby deeply influenced in every respect. The death

of Uzziah was an important crisis. His strong hand had held in check the evils within and the foes without the land. For four years (740-736) Jotham was sole ruler, and continued the sound policy of his father. At his death the sceptre passed into the hand of his son, Ahaz (736-727), a weak, vacillating character, without experience and without faith in God or in man. The floodgates were opened and wickedness and scepticism flooded the land (Isai. v. 18). The feature of the age was its callousness and insensibility (vi. 9f). Yet with all that it was most religious! The Temple services were full and gorgeous (i. 11-15), but their lives were depraved. Religion and righteousness were severed, and Israel had drifted to the level of heathen ideas. Religion thus degenerated into formalism, and that was regarded as constituting a claim upon Jehovah, and so ensuring political security. Prosperity without righteousness was attended with the same fell results in the South as in the North. Corruption prevailed and injustice. Venality marked the judges, greed the landlords, cruelty and oppression the rich, luxury and pride the women. Verily, "the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint."

"In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" (vi. 1). Then and thus was called to the prophetic office the greatest of the prophets—ISAIAH, the son of Amoz. This is no herdsman as Amos, or man of the people as Hosea, or villager as Micah, but a courtier and political adviser of the King and his court. He lives in the capital, and his works reflect not only the life of the city, but also his deep interest in its welfare. He takes part with effect in

the politics of his day, and guides his nation in its most supreme crisis. Yet his rôle is not that of a politician but of the prophet of God to His people. In his call the fundamental notes of his ministry are heard; a holy sovereign—Jehovah, and a people disobedient and insensible; a great judgment, and yet a holy seed left as a stock—a remnant. His ministry began at a critical time. Israel and Syria joined hands against Judah, and panic possessed Ahaz and his people. At sight of the confederate forces their faith in Jehovah's protection failed them, and their sole refuge seemed to be Assyria. In vain Isaiah delivers Jehovah's message. Ahaz believes not, and will not have any sign from God. Isaiah declares that the coveted aid will come to the destruction first of Judah's foes and then of Judah herself (vii. 1ff, viii. 1ff). That act of Ahaz introduced an element into the politics of the next thirty years most fruitful in results. One of these results, according to Kuenen, was that "from the time of the first contact with the Assyrians, the popular religion of Israel loses its independence, and becomes, so to speak, the sport of the world-power. Was it not obvious for the worshipper of the national god, Yahweh, to look about in his perplexity for extraordinary aid?" (Hibb. Lect. 121ff). Then he adds—"Far different was the aspect worn by these events to the prophets. The victories of Assur had no power over their faith." Thus then two religions are tested—the popular and prophetic. What is the relation between the two—Evolution or Degeneration?

Surely it is strange that amid the universal panic the prophet remains calm in Jehovah. The onward march

of Assyria disturbs not his confidence. Damascus fell in 732 and Samaria in 722. Egypt and Assyria move towards each other. Egypt, the mistress of intrigue, profuse of promise and talkative, is described by Isaiah as "*Rahab-that-sitteth-still*" (xxx. 7)—talk, and nothing more. She was ever urging other nations to revolt. At length Assyria inflicted defeat on Egypt in Rafia in 720. The victor appears at the very gates of Jerusalem, claiming victory over the gods of the nations whom he has made subject and taunting Judah. Calm stands Hezekiah in the midst of all the panic and hurrying to and fro, confident in Jehovah (Isaiah xxxvi., xxxvii.). So too the prophet maintains the impregnability of Zion, the city of Jehovah. Sovereign of all nations is He, and infinite His wisdom and power. Assyria is but His tool, to be used and then laid aside (viii. 6ff). The craft of men cannot prevail against Him (xxxi.). The inviolability of His people is therefore a necessity. The nation as such may fall and will fall because of its sin, but the holy remnant will remain (x. 20). "The core of the Jewish nation will survive the judgment and burst out afterwards into new life" (Introd. 208). The conception of God is most exalted throughout, and the faith of the prophet in Him is sublime. That feeble state of Judah need not fear the great world-power or rush to Egypt for aid (x. 24, xxx. 1ff). Its strength was to "stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth."

Contemporary with the later ministry of Isaiah was MICAH, a villager from the Philistine border. He is the prophet of the poor. The same features of society are present as in the three others, but they are viewed from a

different stand-point. He voices the cry of the peasants. "Pinched peasant faces peer between all his words and fill the ellipses" (G. A. Smith). The foundations of society are tottering. Avarice has grasped the heart of princes, judges, priests and prophets. "They build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity; yet will they lean upon the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD in the midst of us? No evil shall come upon us." That false security Micah unmasks and declares that "Zion shall *for your sakes* be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest" (iii. 9ff). Isaiah saw the preservation of Zion a necessity in the interest of the holy remnant. No world-power could ever overthrow it. Micah saw the city resting on foundations of blood and iniquity, and therefore must be overthrown. What no world-power could achieve, the sins of the people could bring to pass. The presence of Jehovah with His people would be proved not by preservation but by destruction. Such a doctrine concerning the fate of the city well-nigh won for Jeremiah a century later the martyr's crown, and it is interesting to note the use then made in his defence of the words of his predecessor, Micah (Jerem. xxvi).

IV.

LOOKING at the work of these four prophets, we perceive that they address their energies to a difficult task. It was no less than the correction of the popular conception of God and religion. "A man's religion is the chief fact with regard to him. A man's, or a nation of men's. . . .

The thoughts they had were the parents of the actions they did; their feelings were parents of their thoughts; it was the unseen and spiritual in them that determined the outward and actual; their religion, as I say, was the great fact about them" (Carlyle, *Heroes*, 3). The battle of the prophets rages around that "great fact." And great fact it verily is, as evinced by the wide gulf that yawned between the two ideas of God and religion. Common to both is the basis—Jehovah, the God of the Hebrew people, and the existence of a bond, or covenant between them. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?" Here the conceptions parted, and the people failed to ask—"Who is like thee, glorious in holiness?" *The obligation involved in that relationship was not duly estimated—"Be ye holy, for I am holy."* The moral issues of the relationship were neglected, and chosen nation of God meant merely honour and privilege. The next step was easy, and easier because marking Semitic religions is the conception, that ceremonialism is indispensable to religion, and that the god served is pledged to support his worshipper at all costs. Ritual thus thrusts morality aside, and security rests not on conduct, but on worship. It follows that assiduous service of form will indemnify moral delinquences. Exaltation of religiousness and degradation of religion naturally ensued. Hence the strange combination attacked mercilessly by the prophets—wickedness and worship. The fact that Jehovah chose us guarantees security, say the people: not independently of holy conduct, answers the prophet. In the hand of the people, the religious idea failed, because a defence of sin and not productive of righteousness.

The condition of religion generally at this period was most degenerate. Princes and people were alike corrupt, and in their evil ways were abetted by priests and prophets, who fell short of their duties. The teachers, who should have been guides in morals and religion, simply lead the people "to err." Practically, therefore, two different religions face each other; one in the practices of the people, the other in the teaching of the prophets. The latter claims to be the continuation of the past, and taunts the former with being a breach of it. This being the language of Amos from S. Judæa, of Hosea from the heart of the Northern Kingdom, of Isaiah from the Southern capital, of Micah from the west of Judæa shows their ideas to be in unity. And as they address the two Kingdoms long parted and hostile, the fact that it is intelligible to both alike assumes a period when the same teaching and observances were universally prevalent.

The forms of irreligion condemned present features of difference. In the Northern Kingdom we find a worship which Amos *implicitly* and Hosea *explicitly* condemns—the Calf or Bull-worship. Montefiore (9) holds that "Jero-boam's famous bulls were not an unheard-of innovation, but the outcome of a calculated conservative movement." Not from Egypt did he derive it, but rather revived an ancient symbolism which the Semitic nations possessed. The Bull was a symbol of strength to an agricultural people. Once located in Bethel, the chief religious centre of the North, it gained a deep hold and served the political purpose of restraining the religious pilgrimages to Jerusalem (1 Kings xii. 26ff). The language of Amos and Hosea treats it as *a kind of Jehovah-worship*. It was

not strict idolatry, nor was it pure worship of Jehovah. These Calves represented Jehovah and were local, sensuous manifestations of Him. It was not idol-worship at first. "Men thought they were worshipping Jehovah. And there may have been true worshippers among them. Some pious hands may have helped to rear those altars, and some devout hearts may have bowed before them. It is always difficult to say what amount of corruption is needed to invalidate religious service" (A. B. Davidson). Its history finds an apt parallel in *Saint-worship* in the Christian Church (Note XXXIV.).

Now the effort to give external embodiment to a god—to have a visible form, ever leads into a grave difficulty, viz., that of preserving a distinction between the god and his image. Instead of revealing deity, the form conceals it. Thus this bull-worship tended to lose the Jehovah presentment, and to drift towards strict idol-worship. Dillmann remarks that "its image-worship became for it—Israel—a bridge by which to pass over into genuine heathenism." Hence an attack on idolatry would necessarily *imply* condemnation too of that which brought Jehovah-worship down to the level of false gods. In Bethel, Gilgal, and elsewhere, this bull-worship was celebrated with great pomp and punctiliousness (Amos iv. 4f, v. 21ff, vii. 13, viii. 14). Lower and less spiritual conceptions prevailed, so that the worship was scarcely removed from that of heathen deities. Unchastity became, under Canaanitish influences, blended with it (Amos ii. 7; Hos. iv. 13) wine and lust, riot and revelry by the sanctuary of Jehovah! Thus we see a worship, which "Amos and Hosea do not reckon a worshipping of Jehovah at all"

(Schultz, i. 221). It is idolatry to them, and it becomes imperative to distinguish clearly the worship of Jehovah from that. "Seek ye Me, but seek not Bethel" (Amos v. 4f). Amos *mentions* the calf but once (viii. 14), and then with contempt. To Hosea this service is mere Baal-worship (iii. 13).

The religion of the Southern Kingdom has not been tainted with *that* form; but it, too, has its dark features. Its two prophets attack it in language more scathing even than the other two the Northern. The Temple was there, and much zeal was displayed in external duties, in multiplying prayers and sacrifices. Canaanitish influences were not wanting, though not to the same extent as in the sister-kingdom (Isai. i. 29; xvii. 8; Mic. v. 14). The same vile practices are not mentioned by the Judæan prophets. Yet, while pure idolatry prevailed (Isai. ii. 8-20; x. 10) the worship of Jehovah had become degenerate. Ritual and religion had become convertible terms. Both were mere routine, utterly devoid of the *personal engagement* of the worshipper.

Thus *in both Kingdoms* religion had become formalism—amount of service and no more. This had become the end and not the means. These being tangible were confidently thought to ensure Divine approbation and protection. Hence a great sense of security was felt, and THE DAY OF JEHOVAH confidently expected. That word is on the lips of the people (Am. v. 18), and means to them *the manifestation of Jehovah on their behalf*. Then a glorious dawn would break upon their darkest night. Full of menace are the words of Amos (v. 18-20) and in language borrowed from his desert life he describes the

subversion of popular expectation—not bright, but “very dark and no brightness in it.” In view of their character and in spite of their much service, *Jehovah must come against them*, and THE DAY would be *for them* one of destruction from the presence of Jehovah. Verily a startling idea! This at once places in the forefront the thought that a Holy God above all things requires holiness in His people. And thus, too, comes to sight the great difference between the prophetic and the popular idea of Jehovah (Amos iii. 2).

This again explains the attitude of the prophets towards *ritual*. They at times use words of apparent disparagement, which seems scarcely consistent with the idea of its Mosaic, or Divine origin. The strong words of the prophet must be read in the light of the exaggerated value set upon sacrifices by the people. The balance of ritual and ethical had turned among the people in favour of the former. To restore it, stress is laid upon the latter. *The ritual was made for the ethical, and not the reverse*. “Sacrifice had never been the Divine, the revealed element in the religion of Jehovah!” (G. A. Smith, i. 104). The ideal of His worship is the fellowship of man with Jehovah—pure, spiritual, imageless communion. The people prized their sacrifices as ensuring Divine favour! Sacrifice had passed into a commercial act, a bargain between the people and God. Not so, says Amos v. 25, did you *win the favour of the Exodus and of the wilderness*. The call to *national* existence at that time was unto holiness, and not unto rounds of sacrifices (Jerem. vii. 22ff). The ritual has ever prevailed; the ethical has ever failed. That Jeremiah was not opposed to sacrifices under all

conditions is evident from xvii. 26, xxxi. 14, xxxiii. 14-18. In such passages as Jerem. vii. 22, says Oehler, "a *relative* contrast is expressed as an *absolute* one, for the sake of laying the whole stress upon one member of the contrast. God so greatly desires heart-service—the demand of this is so entirely the main point—that He is said not to desire sacrifice in comparison therewith" (ii. 295). Hence such a combination and apparent contradiction as Psalm li. 16-19. Ritualism, if not embodying the person, is worse than useless. Its value lies in its being filled with a moral, spiritual personality. Moreover the language of Jerem. vii. 22 cannot mean an *absolute* condemnation of sacrifices simple as such. This would bring him into collision with Deuteronomy, which was already publicly accepted as Divine Law! His thought and language betray its influence, and according to We. he was its author! But Deut. is a mere repetition of the Jehovistic Code, which, even according to Cornill, dates from the beginning of the IX B.C. Could Amos (v. 25) and Mic. (vi. 6f) thus *intentionally depreciate* the provision of this Code?

In contrast to the popular conception then, we find the prophets with one accord dwell on the *ethical* element in the Divine nature and the consequent necessity of it in His people—in life and service. His power rules over nature and nations; His wisdom surpasses all; but both power and wisdom are controlled by sovereign righteousness. The necessary corollary of such a conception is, that He is God alone. This, too, seems to harmonize with an expression of far earlier date—"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

V.

It is an accepted canon of Criticism that "No prophet received a revelation, *not for his own time.*" Stress is laid on the intimate relation of the prophets, one and all, to the history of their own age. It may be admitted that every message was primarily for that day, but not to the exclusion of a deeper, fuller meaning. The above canon implies that the words of the prophets were fully intelligible to the people, else the message ceases to be of value for his time. Its terms must have been such, that the nation was capable of apprehending. That premiss at once involves most weighty conclusions. The work of the prophet is directed to expounding the true relation of the nation to Jehovah and the issues thereof. Now, with one accord, these early prophets charge the nation with *unfaithfulness*,—a meaning-less word surely, if there had been no higher, no better past. Days of betrothal and wedlock must precede conjugal infidelity. The language of each implies a relation to Jehovah, from which the present is a sad declension. With this the later prophets agree, while Jerem. ii. 5-7, 21 actually dates this decadence from the settlement in Canaan. Ever on the lips of prophet after prophet is the nation pictured as rebellious and disobedient of old (cf. Ezek. xx., xxiii.). That view of Jehovah as righteous, and choosing a people for Himself to be like unto Himself, is common to all the seers, and is never announced as a novel discovery. They declare it as a fundamental truth. That that ideal is not realized in the nation is equally insisted on by all, and the

people never venture to deny that they are right. The people of Israel are represented as worse than other nations, and their judgment will be more fiery, not because actually lower, but because measured by a different standard (Amos iii. 2). Though this teaching condemns them in language scathing and merciless, the people dare not gainsay it. It must be unpalatable and provoke resentment, as is implied by Hos. ix. 8—snares for the watchman of God,—but deny it they cannot and dare not. *Their consciences are with the prophets.* The XIX A.D. too abundantly offers illustration of the co-existence of high ideas and low practices to force the conclusion, that the condition of the people demands, that the prophetic teaching should be novel and unknown to the people. Rather to give it any value at all for that time, it is imperative that it should not be novel but familiar.

Montefiore says (9) that Amos and Isaiah stand “on the borderland, which separates monolatry from monotheism. For practical purposes it was, however, distinctly monotheistic, and as such it may be now regarded.” Monolatry is the worship of one god, *without denying the existence of other gods.* Monotheism is the worship of *the one and only* God. Behind this “nascent, still young and immature,” monotheism of these earlier writing prophets lies monolatry, which prevails still in the practices of the nation, viz., Jehovah, the God of Israel, even as Chemosh was god of Moab and Milcom of Ammon, a national deity, whose interests are confined to that nation, and whose very existence and honour are identified with it. At all events, the prophets do not entertain that idea. Their God is the sovereign of *all* nations (Amos i. 3-ii. 3)

as well as of Israel (cf. ix. 7, vi. 1ff; Isa. v. 26, vii. 18, xi. 11f). From earliest times righteousness was an element in the Hebrew idea of Jehovah, and that of itself must overflow the bounds of nationality. On the other hand, the mere use of the phrase "God of Israel," or "God of Abraham," does not surely warrant the conclusion, that the Hebrew idea of Jehovah was merely on a par with that of the surrounding nations of their gods. We. 235: "In these—(*i.e.*, the original accounts as distinguished from the later and *idealized* history)—Israel is a people just like other people, nor is even his relationship to Jehovah otherwise conceived of, than is, for example, that of Moab to Chemosh." Moore on Judges xi. 24, says "The reality and power of the national god of Moab were no more doubted by the old Israelites than those of Yahweh himself!" They are therefore quite on the same level! 1 Sam. xxvi. 19, and 2 Sam. xiv. 16, are cited to prove that the rule of Jehovah was confined to the land of Israel in the mind of David and of the wise woman of Tekoa. *Beyond* the bounds of Israel lay the heathen and their gods; *within* were the worshippers of Jehovah and His sanctuary, where He was to be served. To pass those bounds then sufficed to exile one from the sanctuary. That witnesses to the *limitation* of the knowledge and service of Jehovah to Israel, rather than His equality to the heathen deities. Does not this form indirect testimony to the existence of one sanctuary? At all events, there is limitation of worship. The memories of the Exodus should prove the surpassing power of Jehovah to the people. Still a larger question remains. Supposing such a conception did prevail in Israel, was it

the original one, or a deterioration? A theory of religion framed apart from our documents, or evolved out of them as a conclusion after it has as a premiss cast off as untrustworthy what conflicts with itself, is scarcely an impartial and qualified arbiter. In truth, for the Bible to use the language of the heathen themselves concerning their gods does not necessitate its recognition of their true divinity, or that Jehovah was like unto them as to character and limits of His rule. Fully a century after this so-called "nascent monotheism," when its "immaturity" might be expected to have ripened, we find Jeremiah using similar terms—vii. 18, xlviii. 7. Do Matt. xxii. 32; Acts iii. 13—the God of Abraham, &c.—support such a contention? Is the monotheistic idea *then* mature? The "young, immature" monotheism of Amos is surely most vigorous, since he never calls Jehovah, God of Israel, but Jehovah of the hosts of heaven, to whom all nature and all nations are subject. Gen. xviii. 25 is of JE, and therefore long previous to the days of Amos, and even then the idea of God was wider than Israel—"Judge of all the earth." To emphasize *Thou* in the First Commandment of the Decalogue as if JEHOVAH was God in Israel alone—*Thou*,—but that other gods may exercise sway beyond it, may be pressed in favour of the conclusion that neglect of the last five commandments also were permissible out of Israel!

The distance from such an idea of God to that of Amos and his fellows is far indeed. Amos, the first writing prophet, dwells on a Righteous God demanding a righteous people, *i.e.*, *Ethical Monotheism*. *They are said to be the FOUNDERS of that idea.* Yet they address the people on

that basis, and there is no evidence that they are teaching anything foreign or new. The language of each prophet appeals to a familiar, though ill-appreciated conception of deep meaning (Amos iii. 1, 2; Hos. xi. 1, 3; Isa. i. 2f; Mic. vi. 2ff). These sayings imply choice of Israel by Jehovah—not, as some say, of Jehovah by Israel. Choice there cannot be, if Jehovah had not more than Israel at His command. He could have taken others, but *chose* this one. He stands in no way on equality with Chemosh or any other. Now the prophets come from that Jehovah to His chosen people with a message most repellent in character. "Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?" says Amos iii. 8; cf. Mic. iii. 8. Why do the people suffer themselves to be so arraigned? This is only explicable, when we admit that the view of God and of their own religious history is not strange, but true and recognized also so as to win conviction. Their right to speak is not questioned, though their message is resented (Amos vii. 10; Mic. ii. 6; Isa. xxviii. 9). Now that very consciousness bars the way to advanced conclusions. *The people knew the God whom the prophets proclaimed.* This does not mean that the popular idea of God was as clear as the prophets; but it also excludes the thought that their ideas were on the same level as the heathen. These might follow many gods, but not so Israel, with a good conscience. To them the Lord God was One. That various prophets in such different circumstances should teach the same truths, and again that the people should accept such teaching, even when condemning them, is only intelligible in the light of Jehovah being recognized as speaking through them to His people. (Note XXXV.).

The fact that the prophets spoke to their own age yields yet another result. The message must have been intelligible to them. This feature is emphasized by the Critical theory in certain directions. A most natural inference is that the terms, in which the message was couched, were familiar to the audience. Now one very suggestive and important feature of the prophecies is their many allusions to their past history. Such references, incidental and brief, are almost more valuable than direct statements. The latter *give* full information, the former *presuppose* the possession of it. To have any force at all they must be perfectly familiar to both parties, and readily calling up a train of associations. They refer *allusively* to events and personages deeply imprinted on the memory and consciousness of the people generally. To be unversed in the Bible is to miss the point of countless references in English Literature. Writers of such varied character as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Browning and Tennyson, Scott, Carlyle and Ruskin, use it as an inspiring fount of illustrations, and reveal its impress deep on their thought and language. It forms a subtle bond of union between them and their readers. The Hebrew prophets were preachers first, writers afterwards. Their addresses, in the brief notes extant, touched upon events and personages of the past in illustration of their message. *Such were therefore part of the mental furniture of that age.* Still more, they not only allude to certain facts so as to imply familiarity with the history, but put a certain interpretation upon such facts. That means that the nation has had time to meditate upon and make deductions from such facts.

(Note XXXVI.). Wealth of allusion marks Hosea especially. More than any prophet of his age, he refers casually to the national past, and almost all the history could be pieced together out of his book. The details of Jacob's history, to which no other Scripture after Genesis alludes, find favour with him. With a word he conjures up the past, and how conversant must the people have been with that history to so readily understand the reference. "Hosea's allusions to the past history of Israel," says W. R. S. (195), "are introduced in unexpected ways, and are often difficult to understand." Yes, possibly for us now it may be so, but not necessarily, or even probably (in view of the critical canon cited) for his audience. Elbow-room must be given to our ignorance of those times. Much Hebrew literature perished, probably, in the successive catastrophes of the nation. Its geographical position on the highway from Assyria to Egypt made Palestine the great battle-field of the world-powers, and, even when not itself an object of direct attack, the land was continually disturbed by the din and tumult of contending forces. Such conditions were not favourable to the preservation of writings. The fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. was as that of Constantinople in 1453 A.D. As the Greeks passed over to Italy and introduced to the West the wealth of the East; so the Israelites migrated into Judah, carrying with them invaluable literary treasures. The age of Hezekiah forms the golden age of Hebrew literature—that of Isaiah and Micah. How much perished in that crisis! Enough has survived to be priceless; enough has been lost to make painful our ignorance of important crises. The whole

force of the prophetic teaching lies in the past, which they recall to the mind of the people ; and to correct the errors of their ways, to remember, meditate upon, and act upon the lessons of that past are alone necessary. The point to be observed is the direction of the gaze of prophet and people to a past so different from the present, and yet well known to both parties. As the message then is a "calling to remembrance the former days," that leads to the inference that in the prophet we find the true heir of the past, and not in the popular conceptions which he condemns. Further, these prophets refer clearly to some authoritative standard, by which they test the nation. This is called *Tôrah*, translated Law, more correctly, Direction or Instruction. All four prophets speak of such a law or laws. Kuenen admits that "the existence of *written* Tôrah is expressly asserted in one passage—Hos. viii. 12—and rendered highly probable by the context in others" (Hexat. 175). Now what is meant by this Tôrah? That Law and Pentateuch were not synonymous terms till after the Exile has been already shown. It may help us to bear in mind that Hosea, in charging the *people* with no knowledge of God as their cardinal defect, lays the guilt at the door of the *priests*, who should have taught them. These gave their attention to *ritual at the expense of moral teaching*. Altars were multiplied, but they were "altars to sin" (viii. 11). The services were sensuous and unspiritual, and the priests thrived by cherishing among the people a false idea of God as sacrifice and altar-loving. "They feed upon the sin of my people" (iv. 8). Greed led the priests to err and to foster error. There was thus a knowledge withheld and

an erroneous conception cherished. There were prophets also moved by the same spirit of greed, who combined to cause the people to "forget the law" of their God. Greed, sensuality and superstition hold the field, and deplorable were the consequent decay and degradation.

Under such conditions, is it not strange that the prophets should not hurl the Mosaic Law at these crying evils? What edge and force would it impart to the prophetic protest? Does their not using it prove that it was not existent? Surely a better answer in every sense is Hosea's own—"Though I write for him my law in ten thousand *precepts*, they are counted as a strange thing" (viii. 12). Their minds are so estranged from Jehovah, that His teaching was to them as "something which did not concern them" (Cheyne). An appeal to a law already in their hands *when sinning* would not disturb the people. To rouse the deadened conscience, the prophets urge *thought*—thought on the past, on the Exodus and all involved in that cardinal event of the national history. Thus would they rectify the idea of Jehovah and move them to loyalty. In other words they appeal not to the details of the Law, but to the fundamental relations and principles at its base. There is ever implied a revelation and a teaching—a Tôrah which has been ignored and contravened. Kuenen (i. 56): "Nothing hinders us from even assuming that they also had in view collections of laws and admonitions, to which a higher antiquity, or even a Mosaic origin, was attributed." We. however (p. 57) interprets Hos. viii. 12 differently. "All that can be drawn from the contrast, *instead of following my instructions, they offer sacrifices* (for that is the meaning of the passage),

is that the prophet had never once dreamed of the possibility of cultus being made the subject of Jehovah's directions." In view of the bracketed clause, it seems futile to suggest that Hos. viii. 11 may contribute to the exposition of Hos. viii. 12! The demoralized conception of God led to the idea of His Tôrâh as foreign to them. Let it also be remembered that the prophets attack not the sacrifices *in themselves*, but the importance attached to their efficacy *apart from moral considerations*.

Some rules must have determined the multiplied ceremonies, and evidently the existence of a Tôrâh bearing on morals and ritual is implied in these prophets, sufficiently clearly at least to throw doubt on We.'s conclusion—that Amos and his age are at one "on this, namely, that the sacrificial worship is not of Mosaic origin" (57). Perhaps the neglect of the priests to teach the Law may be due in part to the fact that in the Northern Kingdom the doctrine of the *one sanctuary* in D and P would prove fatal to their own pretensions, while the Temple was standing in Jerusalem. And still further, to complicate matters, the severance of the Ten Tribes was the judgment of Jehovah upon the house of David (1 Kings xi. 9ff). How therefore could unity of Sanctuary hold good in view of that disruption? Perhaps the attitude of Amos and Hosea also, as well as of Elijah and Elisha, may be due not to the non-existence of D or P, but rather to the difficulty of harmonizing both with the severed conditions of national life.

Moreover, a comparison of the prophetic writings with the Pent. reveals multitudes of coincidences of thought and expression, and to such a degree that it is not probable

that it is due to mere coincidence. Two possibilities suggest themselves. Either the Law preceded and was studied by the Prophets; or the Prophets came first and the Law followed, reflecting their language as well as summing up their work. But how can prophecies of VII and VI B.C. be the bases of a Code of the IX or VIII? If the allusions depend on a *source*, oral or written, of our Pent., the question is further complicated—What is the relation between that source and the entire Law? Graf felt that the code and the history allied to it must go together and be dated accordingly. As these prophets show and presuppose in the people acquaintance with the facts of national *history* eminently of JE, must not the argument hold that the related codes were extant? The number of these coincidences finds ready explanation if the prophets possessed the codes and studied them. And that a direct mention of the Law, free from all ambiguity, *must* have been made by them, if in their hands, surely savours of a pre-judgment.

VI.

The prophet himself demands explanation. That he deeply influences the *future* of the nation is granted. What is his exact relation to the past and to the present? Was the conception of One God, and that One righteous in character and requirement, the offspring of prophetic meditation and insight? Did the prophet inherit, or create, or develop that idea of Jehovah? *Was he the founder of Ethical Monotheism?* This is really the core of

the discussion. Is the prophetic idea of God in the VIII B.C. an *advance* upon or continuation of that of the Mosaic times? The distance is simply immeasurable from the idea of religion, described by Evolutionists as that of their age to the doctrine of Amos and his successors. If the age is so low, how is the prophet so high? The very insistence of the critic on the prophet *being of his age* increases the difficulty, when he further puts such a chasm between him and the age in the conception of God and religion. That stride seems like a miracle. The Traditional view dwelt on the predictive element, so as to sever him from his own times. Thus the one elevates him above his contemporaries by *foresight*, the other by *insight*. The language of these four prophets implies the sovereignty of Jehovah over the world of nature and men. That very thought involves His superiority over all else, and being God alone. *Ethical Monotheism is their doctrine*. "The belief that Jehovah was the only God sprang out of the ethical conception of His being," says Kuenen (Hibb. Lect., 119). That the one involves the other is self-evident. Can the one post-date the other? To Comte the unity of Nature was subversive of Polytheism, and demanded the unity of God *as a necessity*. If the monotheistic idea is the product of inquiry into nature and speculation thereon, how is it that the Jews, whom Renan maintains to be the least gifted of all ancient nations in intellect and vigour of speculation, should be the possessors of it? The brilliant genius of Egypt and Greece failed to reach that plane! (Note XXXVII.). Kuenen, we perceived above, bases monotheism on ethics. So also did the prophets. "It

was the prophets who purified the conception of Yahweh (Jehovah) as a God of righteousness and nought besides, and who began the transformation of the only God of a single nation into the only God of the entire world" (Montefiore, 156). Universal sovereignty depends on henotheism (one god of one nation) through ethics. The question merely moves a step—Whence the ethics, then? *And especially from such an environment.* Renan holds the prophets to be the first socialists. This was the root of the matter to them. The poor were ground under the iron heel of the aristocracy, and as *good citizens* they resented it. The worship of the heathen deities (Moloch and Ashtoreth) called forth their *paternal* instinct against human sacrifice on the altar of either. The degradation and immorality connected with idol-worship called forth the ire of their righteous souls. But even if that be granted, the question recurs—Why are *they* actuated above all others by these nobler instincts? Thus the discussion ever leads to the inquiry—Whence did Israel's idea of Jehovah arise? *History makes no answer!*

If these prophets created or founded that religion so inexpressibly exalted above all others, what created them? However much one may see and explain by standing on the shoulders of the prophet, what of *himself*? What accounts for such a phenomenon? Effects demand causes adequate to produce them. The law of environment seems thus to break down. Cornill says that "Amos is one of the most wonderful appearances in the history of the human spirit;" and We. that he is "the founder and purest type of a new order of prophecy." When we remember the environment in both Kingdoms,

such a moral and spiritual teacher is verily a marvel ! If stress be laid on the *irreligious* element in the nation, the *prophet* becomes a mystery ; and no less a mystery will the *nation* prove, if stress be laid on the *religious* element. The prophetic picture of the nation on the one hand, and the prophetic consciousness on the other, create a dilemma.

Whatever was the difference between the two Kingdoms, both reveal a degraded idea of God. To change that is the great task of the prophets. To banish the thought that service of God is external—*so much sacrifice*—and to lead the people to feel that Jehovah entered into their history, *i.e.*, a personal relation. Hence religion becomes an inward, life-pervading power, fruitful in consequence. That being so, unfaithfulness means alienation of Jehovah, and fidelity guarantees security through His defence. Mightiest empires and most powerful confederacies would be as nought before Jehovah. One of themselves says, and the others repeat it—"The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy ?" (Amos iii. 8). *Jehovah hath revealed Himself*. Not as the fruit of official training came that to Amos (vii. 14)—he was member of no guild—but "the LORD took me. . . and the Lord said to me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel" (vii. 15). Thus then came to the prophets their great thoughts. Yet not one of them speaks, as if it were novel to the people, but they appeal, as though it were familiar. The degraded people recognize the scathing words of condemnation as true. Hence, therefore, these ideas are common to the consciousness of both speaker and hearers. Whence have the people the means of understanding their teachers so readily ? Both

presuppose a past. The language of the prophets postulates a nobler past, from which there has been a sad declension. There must also have been a nucleus of good men of God, who cherished amid the general defection the spirit and memories of that past.

The language of the prophets would almost imply that the *whole* nation was unsound. But it must be remembered that they regard the nation *as a unit*. The doctrine of the Individual has not yet become prominent in the Old Test., though not entirely absent. The community is regarded as if one, and what is true of the part is true of the whole. Their words of reprobation therefore must not be strained to include *every member* of the community. Silence covers a most important section of the people, which kept alive the knowledge of God. The influence of ISAIAH on the history of Judah's religion was deep and far-reaching. Prophecy became henceforward a most important factor in the *national* life. Will not the gathering around him of that community mentioned in viii. 11 explain the secret of that influence? His work was carried on through them. When we ascend to a century earlier in the history of Israel, we hear a prophet weary and despondent saying, "I, even I only am left;" and receiving the assurance that seven thousand were still found in Israel loyal to Jehovah (1 Kings xix. 14-18). . . . A remnant was still left when the majority had gone astray. The people have changed, yet not all. Such a succession kept the flame of true religion alive. This preserved the knowledge of Jehovah in the desert (Amos), in the village (Micah), in the town (Hosea), in the capital (Isaiah). The writing prophets were the flower and heirs of the past.

VII.

THE inquiry is therefore carried back into the period preceding the *writing* prophets—that which is often incorrectly designated *pre-prophetic*. It is but too true that this period has no adequate record. Instead of details of the picture, broad outlines only are given. Even with the assistance of Archæology, our knowledge of the inner history of the Jews in the IX B.C. is fragmentary, and of the centuries preceding still more so. Yet our ignorance does not entitle us to underrate, and certainly not to ignore it. The tendency of the present is to depreciate the religion before the VIII B.C. That, as we have seen, does not explain, but deeply complicates matters. The prophet is an inexplicable problem in that case.

The history of Israel is throughout full of prophetic activity. (Note XXXVIII.). These inspired teachers always appeared at great crises to guide the destinies of the nation. Few of the Kings, either of Israel or Judah, are represented without a prophetic adviser, who fearlessly denounces the sins of high and low alike. At the same time their words are directly addressed to the leaders of the nation, “who made Israel to sin.” “Of religious figures, the earliest and most characteristic is that of the prophet” (Schultz, i. 237). The line of succession runs back to the beginnings of national history (Amos ii. 11, iii. 7; Jerem. vii. 25, xv. 1). These were the statesmen, for politics and religion were interwoven in the Israelitish theocracy. These were the poets and historians. Of them we know far too little; for the references in the

historical books are very brief. A few stand forth commanding figures, as Elijah and Elisha, but even with regard to them the information is but scanty. The history of their inner life would doubtlessly be a revelation of the religious condition of their time. The limits of our knowledge however should not give licence to imagination, nor should the scantiness of the materials lead to depreciation of them. Under these conditions are we entitled to say with Cheyne, that "Elijah, though strong in practice, was weak in spiritual intuition?" (H. C., 143). No representation of the prophetic character will suffice, which does not take cognizance of the fact, that to themselves and to their generation, they were the servants of Jehovah—"As the LORD, the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand." Such is ever the representation of these men of God, and through them the voice of God is ever heard among His people.

The history of this order carries us back to that remarkable period, when the evil and troublous times of the Judges came to an end. This new era opens with the strong figure of Samuel guiding the nation, raising it from its degenerate condition, and laying down the lines of a better future (1 Sam. iii. 9ff, iv. 1, vii. 1ff, 15ff). He was second only to Moses in his great work and influence on the nation (Jerem. xv. 1). His *political* work was important, for the nation was engaged in a struggle of life and death with the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 11-14). His *educational* engagement was also most fruitful for the welfare of religion. Around him we find a band of men—a guild called later the sons of the prophets, which first appear in the record at the anointing of Saul (1 Sam.

x. 5ff). Thus come together the two factors, which wield potent influence over the people and over each other—the king and the prophet. We next meet this guild, when David flees from Saul and takes refuge in Ramah with Samuel (xix. 18-24). After that they appear in the time of Elijah and Elisha, when they evidently form a considerable company (1 Kings xx. 35; 2 Kings ii. 3, 5, 17, iv. 1, 23, 38, ix. 1). They appear thus *in history* at two important periods and grouped about great personalities. It has been held that between these two sets of guilds—that of Samuel and that of Elijah two centuries later (XI-IX)—there was no continuity, but that the former stood on a lower plane than the latter. It is noticeable however that these *schools* in the IX appear in places connected with the history of Samuel, and *may* have been founded by him *on circuit* (1 Sam. vii. 15f). That there was closer relation between these companies and Elijah and Elisha than between Samuel and the bands of his time, may be surmised from the fact that the prophets of the XI are not called *Sons of the prophets* as are those of the IX. The term *School* can only be used of the earlier companies therefore with considerable qualification. They were probably a band drawn together to cherish by common exercise the prophetic gift. They first appear when the Ark of God had been led into captivity and had not yet returned to its own place. They therefore form a centre for the development of the national religious life. This embodiment of the awakening life of Israel presents many a difficult problem. Tradition and Criticism are in full conflict concerning them. "It is important," says Ladd, i. 122, "for a true conception of Hebrew prophecy,

to observe that the distinctive characteristics of these schools are without exception *not* the distinctive characteristics of genuine Hebrew prophecy, although the former characteristics may be incidentally connected with the latter." It is still well to remember once more that our data are not too abundant, and hence dogmatism must be excluded. At their *first* appearance, they form a band of religious enthusiasts around some centre of worship. Excited performances accompany their actions, which have invited comparison with the frenzy of the heathen prophets and of the dervishes. Samuel's "calm sobriety contrasts with their excited emotionalism," so that he was not one of them, for "there is nothing excited or dervish-like about his action and speech" (Montefiore, 76f). Hence this author infers its Canaanitish origin, and the actions of the prophets of Baal on Carmel are thought to support that contention. This is one of the many "foreign elements in the religion of Israel assimilated and conquered by its own vital power" (Cornill). What a vital power that must have been, and whence could such have been derived? The Hebrew nation was evidently the least original of all nations! Verily the transaction of Exod. xii. 35f inaugurated a wholesale system of *borrowing*! Its whole religious paraphernalia formed a patch-work, culled from all peoples with whom it came into contact, each minute part of which some critical eye can disentangle and trace to its source! In truth the character of the writings demands a better spirit than that of We. (268) concerning 1 Sam. xix. 18-24: "We can scarcely avoid the suspicion that what we have before us here is a pious caricature; the point

can be nothing, but Samuel's and David's enjoyment of the disgrace of the naked King!!" When we look at their *second* appearance in history, there is a difference, but not too great a difference to be accounted for *by the events of the intervening period*. In this, as in all else, there has been development. The period of the Judges, dark and troubled, lies at the back of the one. Upon men who lived in *hard times*, when the hand of the oppressor was crushing the land, a dawn of hope broke, and the flame of patriotism burned bright. That prophetic excitement afforded an outlet for the great national upheaval. The heathen soothsayer was regarded as being under the influence of his god in proportion to the *loss of self-control*. But if there are points of apparent *contact*, there are also others of *contrast* between this early prophetic band and some features of the heathen religious life around them. That Samuel was their patron bars the way to the interpretation that they were such a low, excited company of dervishes, that the presence of Saul among them was a surprise! Such a great and honoured person in *such* low society! It even passed into a proverb—"Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1 Sam. x. 11, xix. 24). There is another and older interpretation. Our ideas of Saul and of the prophets naturally determine for us, which of the two words should receive emphasis. And the relation between Samuel and the guilds of his day will materially influence our idea of the latter. With the days of Samuel, an era of literary activity began. "That *sacred literature* was also cherished in this association at Ramah, may be regarded as certain, for prophetic authorship undoubtedly begins with Samuel,—at first, indeed, in the form of

theocratic history" (Oehler, ii. 145). The proverb probably refers to the sight of a person engaged in exercises alien to his former habits. Saul among the men of letters or among the members of the prophetic College! In the times of Ahab and Jehu they form the religious nucleus of the Northern people grouped around Elijah and Elisha. Severed from the sanctuary at Jerusalem by the disruption of the Ten Tribes, the spiritual life of the pious of Israel was nourished by the ministrations of these sons of the prophets. Revived possibly by Elijah, or rather roused to greater activity and efficiency, it became a potent force in the history (1 Kings xxii. 6). This revival was coincident with a great crisis in the annals of Israel. Ahab was guilty of two grave actions. The one was the introduction of Baal-worship into Samaria (1 Kings xvi. 31ff). This was the opening of the floodgates of sensuality, for Baal-worship was attended by gross licentiousness. Thus, as the Bull-worship violated the Second, the Baal violated the First Commandment. The other was the murder of Naboth (1 Kings xxi.). Both acts struck at the fundamental principles of Mosaism—at the basis of the theocratic institution—Israel the people of Jehovah, and Jehovah the Holy and Righteous. The servant of Jehovah must act with decision. The existence of true religion is in the balance (xviii. 18). No other god can be acknowledged beside Jehovah, and all relations of righteousness are "evil in the sight of the LORD." These two ideas constitute *Ethical Monotheism*, and are found in the IX, not VIII B.C. (p. 148). "The air of unique grandeur that surrounds the prophet of Gilead, proves how high he stood above the common level of his

time. It is Jehovah and Elijah, not against Ahab alone, but against and above all the world" (W. R. S., 81). Now it is one thing to hold that *in the record* of the O. T., these writing prophets *first* launch a direct polemic against idols (cf. Montefiore, 128); it is quite another thing to maintain that theirs was *actually the first condemnation*. Elijah's *action* is a most vigorous protest, and actions embody convictions. And the actions of Elijah express the same convictions as the words of Amos and Hosea. Again the power of such mighty reformations as Elijah's lies in their being the revival of old truths and principles—buried and forgotten. The conscience of the nation must ever see itself reflected in the acts of the Reformer. The work of Elijah thus implies a relation to the *future*, as he expresses like truths with Amos, and to the *past* owing to the response of the nation.

Here at least we have one stout heart that pours bitter ridicule on the Tyrian God (xviii. 27), clearly proving that he knows but ONE GOD—Jehovah the Lord of hosts. "Elijah gave his last thoughts to confirming his younger colleagues in the true religion," conjectures Cheyne (H. C., 166); whereas W. R. S. (85) maintains that "Elijah had little to do with these guilds," but that Elisha found his closest followers among these sons of the prophets. We. (293) delights to depreciate these earlier pre-writing prophets—"the average of them were miserable fellows." Lightfoot remarked in his argument with the Author of Supernatural Religion: "In the land of the unverifiable, there are no efficient critical police." Conclusions based on imagination lie beyond the reach of refutation! And Comparative Religion fails us here, for

"in all the religious history of mankind, there is nothing that can be compared to the prophetic order in Israel" (A. B. Davidson). Unquestionably therefore the Writing Prophets may not be exalted at the expense of depreciating those that went before. A pre-conceived theory may find in Amos vii. 14 an indignant repudiation of a discredited company. We. (293): "Amos of Tekoa . . . felt it an insult to be counted one of them." An older interpretation, quite as natural and certainly less offensive, credits Amos with greater modesty, and makes his words to be a simple disclaimer of any *prophetic training*. Such had indeed never been a *necessary* qualification of a prophet. (Note XXXIX.).

VIII.

THESE discredited guilds may contribute to the solution of some difficulties. The recognition of the presence of both human and Divine elements may also explain some questions touching themselves. The distance from Elisha to Amos covers about forty years. Thus the guilds once presided over by the former, might still be flourishing. Here then lies a clue to the existence of the faithful nucleus, which cherished the religious truths which the prophets came to enforce, and which so leavened the nation with knowledge of its history and of the elements of religion that they were able to apprehend the prophetic message. Thus was religion preserved in the land. This accounts for the education of the prophet and also of the nation in religion.

Two centuries roll away between Elijah and Samuel, but Hebrew tradition has not left it a blank. Great events happen. David mounts the throne of Saul, and establishes his kingdom and wins Jerusalem to be his capital and also a centre of religion. Priests and prophets favour him and he is at the head of the theocratic party. His claims to be a religious poet are acknowledged, even though Criticism denies him the authorship of but few Psalms. His four successors on the throne—Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa—had their prophetic advisers. Hence the line of witnesses was preserved from Samuel to Elijah and thence down to Amos. This accounts at once for the environment that gave birth to the prophets, as well as the intellectual apprehension of religion in a nation which practically ignored its requirements.

Such a school or guild also would explain the culture of the prophets. "Elijah and Micah ben Imla were their fore-runners (*i.e.*, of the writing prophets)," says Cheyne. But were they the only fore-runners? Surely not. Amos has already a highly developed style. Who then were their literary teachers? To whom, like Dante, could he own himself indebted for the fair style which hath won him honour? Ewald supposed that prophetic books of this kind were not infrequently written during the earlier period." Unsparing praise is lavished on the style of Amos, "himself an excellent stylist, in whose book only perverse ingenuity can trace marks of rusticity" (W. R. S.). "His imagery, in fact, from its freshness and appropriateness almost reminds one of Dante, and entitles him to as high a place in the history of literature as in that of theistic religion" (Cheyne; cf. S. R. D., 317). Now whence came

Amos by that culture? And it may further be asked, why he wrote at all, whereas Elijah and Elisha did not write. To this We. makes answer, that in the interval, "a non-literary had developed into a literary age" (465). But why that development? It is true that Jeroboam II and Uzziah raised their Kingdoms to great prosperity, and that the conditions of life underwent great changes. Amos appears after some twenty years of that reign. Do the external conditions suffice to produce such a revolution? And especially would that be improbable if we remember the dark and straitened years preceding. Once we admit that these guilds contained noble spirits, active in writing and teaching, it becomes possible to explain the culture, the continuity of teaching and of interpreting the history of the past. The knowledge of Jehovah did not die out of the land. A faithful remnant conceives of Jehovah on the high level of *Ethical Monotheism*.

Moreover this same guild offers explanation of another difficulty. The people, to whom our prophets address their message, find the words of other prophets more to their taste. These were "the false prophets"—a term never used in the O. T. Jeremiah speaks of men, who "prophesied falsely" (v. 31, viii. 10, xxix. 9)—"prophesy lies" (xiv. 14, xxiii. 32)—"even the prophets of the deceit of their own heart" (xxiii. 26)—their vision "of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD" (xxiii. 16). All such the LORD discards (xxiii. 21; Mic. iii. 5ff). These were the fruit of the popular desire (Isai. xxx. 9ff). False prophets flourished before the destruction of Jerusalem in the VI B.C. as in the I A.D. 1 Kings xxii. offers an interesting study in prophecy. Four hundred in the

name of JEHOVAH predict success to Ahab. One dares speak of ill in His name too. The one speaks from GOD: the others reflect public opinion and cater for its support. "False prophecy might have its place in *Israel*; but it had no rightful place in the *religion* of Israel" (Orac. 95). How came that false prophecy? The prophetic guild had become a profession, and were then beset by all the perils of such a condition. The Christian ministry abundantly illustrates the position. Not every one who wore the parson's garb, was, as Chaucer says of his good parson, "a shepherd and no mercenary." So of old, some wore the garb and ate the fare, but lacked the spirit and insight of the true prophet. The one grasped the idea that Jehovah was Israel's God, and then inferred that His sovereign power must defend the nation irrespective of their moral condition. The other starts from the same premiss, but argues from the holiness of Jehovah that Israel must perish for its sins, not *in spite*, but *because* of its relation to Jehovah. Thus it really amounts to a right or wrong way of applying truths. Isaiah, regarding a holy city and temple necessary for the preservation of the religion of Jehovah, preaches the inviolability of Zion and its Temple, even though the nation perish. After him the security of the Temple was regarded as guaranteeing the safety of the nation, and so became a refuge of lies. Hence Jeremiah attacks *that* position (vii. 4ff), and declares that the Temple itself must perish (xxvi.). Thus the false prophets and the true are opposed to each other. The former echo the sentiment of their day: the latter condemn it. "The main distinction between the two is, as Jeremiah insists, the

thoroughly moral character of the preaching of the true man of God. He never proclaims *unconditional* happiness and salvation. Prophets, who know how to speak of nothing but happiness and blessing, are always false prophets, who speak according to the desires of their own and the people's heart" (Schultz, i. 263). The powers of the true prophet are devoted to the fulfilment of the will of Jehovah. The powers of the false are subject to meaner motives and directed to meaner ends.

Once we postulate the activity, sanity, and skill of these sons of the prophets, we recognize the influences that make the rise of the VIII B.C. prophets intelligible. There is a faithful nucleus ever continuing. On its lower or professional side we meet the other prophets, who speak in the name of Jehovah, though "they have seen nothing" (Ezek. xiii. 3). The work of these guilds also qualifies the nation to appreciate the message of the prophets and educates a conscience to ratify it. This too will explain the uniformity of consciousness which marks all the Hebrew prophets, and the features common to the message of all.

. One question still remains. What accounts for the condition of the nation as reflected in the writings of the VIII B.C. prophets? If the guild will explain the *better* features in the national life, what accounts for the *lower*? While the prophets and the nucleus around them are connected thus with a high and noble past; with what can that aspect of the national religion, so severely condemned by the prophets, be linked? In other words, what elements went to the making of the Hebrew nation of the times of the Monarchy, and what determined the character of the popular religion?

THE JUDGES;
OR,
THE TRANSFORMATION OF ISRAEL.

"And the LORD raised up judges . . . And the spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel."

JUDGES.

"They did not destroy the peoples, As the LORD commanded them ;
But mingled themselves with the nations, And learned their works :
And they served their idols ; Which became a snare unto them."

PSALMS.

"The time that followed the migration to Canaan was for the Hebrews the time of the severest struggle of ideas."

ED. KÖNIG.

"The continued existence of a religion implies the maintenance of a religious community, united by acts of worship, and handing down the Knowledge of God from father to son by inculcation, not only of religious doctrine but of religious praxis."

W. R. SMITH.

"The period is the creative epoch of historical Israel ; the workshop in which the nation, as we know it, was fashioned. We observe the origin of that complication which the canonical prophets seek to unravel ; the knot is being tied, which they use all their efforts to unloose."

A B. DAVIDSON.

"The work of the prophets can only be comprehended in its relation to the national religion of Israel."

G. F. MOORE.

THE JUDGES; OR, THE TRANSFORMATION OF ISRAEL.

THE Book of Judges contains the record of a most important epoch. The nation was now entering on conditions entirely new and under circumstances hitherto unparalleled in their history. It is the story of the formation, rather than of the foundation of the nation—the making of the Hebrew people. The exact limits of the book must however be recognized. For the knowledge of the civil and religious condition of Israel, for at least *two centuries* after entering Canaan, it remains our sole source of information. It deals with *external* history—the oppressions and deliverances together with the heroes that won the latter for them. Yet that external history ever stands related to Jehovah, and the key to their varying fortunes lies in their changeful attitude to Him. When faithful to Him all goes well with them: their defection forfeits His protection and weakens their strength, so as to become the prey of surrounding nations. Their sole bond of cohesion and pledge of security lie in relation to Him. The condition depicted therein is not that of a unity constant and abiding. The Exodus had banded them into a nation, and yet the tribal divisions had continued through the Wilderness into Canaan. Hence the Conquest was a failure as well as a success,

and both most fruitful in consequences. Joshua divided the land among the Tribes by lot, and each marched forward to win its own. Judg. i.—“one of the most precious monuments of early Hebrew history,” Moore (7) —tells the story of that war of occupation. In their isolated condition they were unable to extirpate the Canaanites, who henceforth proved an important factor in the history of Israel. Now two features present themselves. A disintegration goes on and the tribes fall apart from each other. Already Judah and Ephraim appear as the leading powers, and, as if in forecast of the future, the smaller tribes rally around Ephraim, whose portion lay in the centre of the land. This was the most powerful tribe, and evidence is given of their masterful spirit (viii. 1ff, xii. 1ff). Within its borders also was Shiloh—the home of the “Tent of Meeting.” These two tribes—Judah and Ephraim—throughout the history display jealousy and antagonism which issue finally in the disruption under Rehoboam. From Mt. Ephraim came Deborah, and in her Song no mention is made of Judah as coming “to the help of the LORD against the mighty.” The weight of oppression fell partially, *i.e.*, only on certain tribes. Thus we find the Judges were Tribal Captains ruling *their own* tribes and delivering them. There was disunion rather than national unity. However, the Canaanites themselves were not a compact confederacy, and could not present a solid front to the assault of Israel. Thus the disunion of the Canaanites prevented the repulsion of their foe; and the disunion of Israel the extermination of theirs. In all this the author of Judges reads the hand of Jehovah, who through the presence of

the natives punishes the unbelief, proves the fidelity of Israel, and also affords them practice in the arts of war" (ii. 20ff, iii. 1ff).

Hebrew and Canaanite therefore settled together with disastrous consequences to the former. The latter held the fortified cities in a line which separated the strong tribes of Joseph and Judah. Israel, thus parted, settled among the inhabitants and came into contact with high civilization and a language akin to their own. Inter-marriage followed, and in its train came participation in their customs and modes of worship. This was fatal to the religious exclusiveness to which they were called. Though possessed of the arts of civilization, the Canaanites were utterly immoral, and the impure excesses practised in their religion are well-nigh inconceivable. The seductions of that worship lay in its appeal to the passions of men. Not on the *intellectual* side did idolatry throw its spell over the people, but through the gross and sensual. Amos and Hosea show drunkenness and profligacy practised by the very door of the sanctuary. "Just as physical life is divided into two sexes, they thought that the divine productive power was male and female; and assigning to this sexual analogy a great and liberal prominence in all the observances of worship, their religion easily ran into sensuality, and lent its countenance to every form of immorality, if only performed at the sanctuary and the sacred feasts. Instead of offering a sanction to sobriety and domestic purity, the exercise of Canaanite religion gave the rein to the animal nature, and so took the form of Dionysiac orgies of the grossest type" (W. R. S., 27). Hence drunken carousals and

sexual excesses were associated with worship, and the very sanctuaries were styes of gross licence. Indeed, the O. T. suggests that in the Canaanites themselves there had been a grievous declension (cf. Gen. xv. 16; 1 Kings xxi. 26; Amos ii. 9), and their extermination was the consequence of that vile self-abandonment (Lev. xviii. 27ff; Deut. xii. 29ff). Amid such associations the moral and spiritual tone of Israel was lowered. The unspiritual lost sight of the spirituality of Jehovah. There arose a religious syncretism, or mixture, in which the unique feature of Jehovah-religion was lost sight of, *i.e.*, the *ethical*—"Be ye holy, for I am holy." Thus in absorbing the Canaanite survivors, Israel drifted into a debased view of Jehovah. Removed from His Sanctuary by settlement, and finding Canaanitish high places near at hand, the temptation waylaid them to frequent these, professedly to worship Jehovah there and thus. This then forms the parentage of that conception of Jehovah and His service assailed by Amos and Hosea. The infiltration of the spirit and customs of their heathen neighbours offers a solution of one side of that religious condition of Israel. (Note XL.).

And yet the lamp of God was not extinguished. True religion did not succumb to the evil environment, however subtle and powerful its seductions. What preserved it amid such demoralizing forces? This survival proves the intrinsic greatness of Israel's religion. "The people whom Hosea and Amos describe were not fitted to maintain themselves apart from the heathen among whom they dwelt. Scattered among strange nations, they accepted the service of strange gods (Deut. xxviii. 64),

and losing their distinctive religion, lost also their distinctive existence" (W. R. S., 154). The marvel is, not that faith in Jehovah suffered from the reeking atmosphere about the nation, but that it survived at all. Apart from the surging and sweltering masses, and also from the political commotions dwelt a remnant fearing Jehovah, and who spake together of "all the great work of the LORD that He had wrought for Israel." The defaulting generation was one ignorant of the LORD and of His works (Ps. cvi., cvii.). The lapse of time, the influence of their surroundings led to forgetfulness and degeneration. Yet amid all this, there survived the consciousness of relation to Jehovah on the part of the Tribes and the conception of *Israel as One*. This pervades the Song of Deborah, which is admitted to be of the age it depicts, both in its terms of praise and of reproach. The fierce indignation also, which stirred the Tribes at the occurrence of a grievous crime (xix.-xx.), and created united action against the abettors, proves not only the underlying unity but also the *ethical* element. Even if that moral act be placed at the *beginning* of this period, it proves that Israel *entered* on this eventful time with high moral ideas, occupying a higher plane than its neighbours. "The old proverbs, 'No such thing ought to be done in Israel,' and 'Folly in Israel' imply a high morality" (Schultz, i. 147). In that case a higher level must have been abandoned for a lower—not development in a straight line.

We. (5 p.) says that "the period of the Judges presents itself to us as a confused chaos, out of which order and coherence are gradually evolved under pressure of external circumstances, but perfectly naturally and without the

faintest reminiscence of a sacred unifying constitution that had formerly existed." The latter statement is the natural issue of a theory of development in a straight line upwards from chaos to order. But why should *Israel alone* move upwards, and not *all* the Semitic nations? "The real significance of Israel's fortunes lies in the preservation and development of the national faith, and the history of the tribes of Jacob is rightly set forth in the Bible as the history of that Divine discipline, by which Jehovah maintained a people for Himself amidst the seductions of Canaanite worship, and the ever-new backslidings of Israel" (W. R. S., 32). When the purpose of the Book of Judges be kept in view—to tell the story of an important period and to interpret its great events—Jehovah educating His people to realize His own true character and their own relation to Him—educating them through the facts of national life,—it will not appear strange, that *religious institutions are not even mentioned*. External history reflects the internal. The conditions of this period may account for the non-observance of the great annual feasts. In this is involved the question of one central sanctuary. Judg. viii. 27 condemns the worship of Gideon as a snare and idolatry. The sanctuary of Micah is the result of a lawless time (xvii. 1-6). Both imply an infringement of what was legalized. Moreover, the frequenting of "high places" may not disprove the existence of the Law *now* any more than at a much later time when the possession of it is fully admitted. In spite of the reforming activity of several Kings, these high places seem to retain their hold upon the people. Why should it not be as true of the earlier stages of Hebrew

history as of the later—"Without the Law the Jews would have been absorbed in the nations, just as the Ten Tribes were absorbed and disappeared in their captivity" (O. T. J. C., 279)?

Now it is argued that this Book has been written with a purpose. "By historical examples he would warn his contemporaries against a like apostasy. His motive and aim are thus not historical but religious" (Moore, xvi.). This, it is argued, makes the date about VI B.C., because the conception is that of the prophets. Even if that late date were granted, the question is if the historian faithfully presents the *facts*. If he does, the theory of development in a straight line falls, and *Apostasy* characterized the nation. On the other hand, it is not impossible that the prophetic view of the history but presents an interpretation of it which prevailed from early times. History must ever be written under the inspiration of a theory. Impartial history-writing is always difficult, if not impossible. After all effort at self-elimination, there will be left a subtle, personal element, operating consciously or unconsciously. Inspiration did not relieve the sacred historians of the duties of painstaking research, but rather ruled their use of such material as lay at their command.

Moore remarks on Judg. xx. 18ff—that "it is not history, it is not legend, but the theocratic ideal of a scribe, who had never handled a more dangerous weapon than an imaginative pen!" This imaginative pen, we are informed, re-wrote—idealized the past history to justify its own times—to produce a continued record of observance of the sacred institutions from the beginning! Well, indeed, has it been called an *imaginative* pen! And yet

it is somewhat strange that a pen of such vigour and of such brilliant parts should have produced such a book as Judges! Why not fill it with record of pious deeds, of religious observances, &c.? The national conditions do not seem to justify later observances. It may be replied, that the interpretation or theory of history does so—the use made of the facts. The whole question turns upon the inquiry—which theory best and most correctly interprets the facts? We claim that the nearer the source, the more secular the history. But if the nation was born in the manifestation of God on its behalf, and if its history is the record of the relation of God and the nation—if Revelation is a fact, that dictum breaks down. The nearer we go to the source, the more full will it be found of the supernatural.

This period is the seed-plot of the subsequent history. This picture, so stern and simple, has all the appearance of truth. What later writer, *especially idealizing the past for a purpose*, would have revealed so unsparingly the defections of his people? Their faults are mercilessly exposed. No tribe is represented as free from grave defects, no hero without sad blemishes. If this may be regarded as the true picture, and the *framework*, which makes it a declension, an editorial addition, then it favours the view that the religion of Israel did develop in a *straight line upwards*. But that position must first be established. “At first the religion of Israel was polytheism” is the theory of Kuenen (i. 223); and down to the beginning of the Babylonian exile the great majority were so. The proof of this is Jerem. ii. 28, xi. 13. It is interesting to remember Jerem. xxxi. 31f! May not the

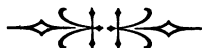
one throw light upon the other? The Apostasy view is the Biblical conception of the history of Israel consistently offered in the historical and prophetic books. When we regard the elements so mighty for dissolution, what preserved Israel from destruction? Why did the Israel of the Monarchy emerge at all from the chaos of XIV-XII B.C.? Once we admit the presence of "a unifying institution" (even though We. may not be able to discover the "faintest reminiscence" of it), we find the necessary bond of cohesion. If the prophets are made the arbiters of Israel's religion, they one and all unite in supporting a declension from a higher level, which Jeremiah dates from the occupation of Canaan. Israel too was ever ready to assimilate the religious customs of the nations about them, and so lose a certain religious level. The possession from the beginning of some unique inherent power will alone explain the continuance of the nation. And Judah, the seat of that unifying power, remains for 136 years after the sister-kingdom perishes.

Which then is the more probable theory—an evolution "under the pressure of *external* circumstances," *and that alone*? That leaves unexplained the fact that the *pressure* should so tend here, and not among others. Or that a higher level has been lost under such pressure affecting all nations alike? The latter falls in with the facts of human history. If, as We. holds, Hosea, the prophet of *Israel*, first propounded that doctrine of apostasy, how came that reading of history to be accepted by the prophets of *Judah*? Would not the Southern Kingdom, both people and prophets, have repudiated it *if not true*?

That there is a development in Israel's apprehension of its religion may be admitted. The conditions of revelation mean limitation and development. The presence of the Human and Divine demand this. To fail to recognize this introduces confusion. But its recognition floods with light the paths of men. The moral delinquencies, in themselves unjustifiable, are intelligible in the gradual leading of men by God. He is pleased to condescend to men, as and where they are, in order to *educate* them both in knowledge and in morality. Thus it is not that men *of themselves* move upwards. "That the religion of Israel, though subject in its growth to historical conditions, is not to be explained as arising solely out of them, is not, in other words, to be treated as a natural product of the genius of the people, appears besides from the fact that it stands from the beginning above the ordinary level that was reached by the nation generally: throughout its history the people are represented as needing to be taught by others, as declining from truth by which they ought to have been guided, as falling short of the ideal propounded to them. The natural tendencies of the nation did not move in the direction of spiritual religion. There is no ground to suppose that, apart from the special illumination vouchsafed to the great teachers who originated, or sustained, the principles of its faith, the religious history of Israel would have differed materially from that of the kindred nations by which it was surrounded" (Sermons, 137f).

Two elements therefore constitute the key to Israel's history, viz., the presence of a constant tendency to depart from Jehovah—to apostasy; and also the presence

of an inner circle, a nucleus, a remnant ever moving forwards to an increasingly clear apprehension of His character and of man's relation to Him. Nothing in Scripture justifies the absence of either at any period.



MOSES AND MOSAISM.

" And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face."

DEUTERONOMY.

" The words denote the special pre-eminence of Moses among the prophets."

DRIVER.

" It is certain, unless the very greatest thing in all history is to be ascribed to accident, that Moses was one of the very greatest of men, and operated with wonderful powers and results."

EWALD.

" With the exception of Jesus, Moses is the most important religious personality of whom we have really trustworthy historical information."

SCHULTZ.

" Moses was the founder of the nation out of which the Torah and the prophecy came as later growths. Moses gave no new idea of God to his people."

WELLHAUSEN.

" Moses enforces the belief in one God, not as a new truth, but as the inspiration and support of personal and social duty. Conduct, character, is the one end of the Mosaic system. God moves among His people to guide them to the end."

WESTCOTT.

" Moses was truly, what Spinoza calls him, 'a voice in the air.' "

T. C. EDWARDS.

MOSES AND MOSAISM.

I.

WHILE the settlement among the Canaanites supplies the conditions necessary for defection, and so explains the complicated state of the nation in VIII B.C., the mere survival of the Israelites demands the presence in their religion of some unique element. With one accord the writers, whether of history or prophecy or psalmody, look back to the EXODUS as the act which gave birth to the nation. There the history of the Jewish Church begins. A few writers may deny the credibility of this early period altogether, following to their logical conclusion the principles of their destructive criticism. This, however, betrays a want of due sense of the value of historical tradition. This embodies the consciousness of the nation, and that must have some trustworthy basis. Kittel says with truth (i. 186) that "it would betoken a high and more than normal degree of deficiency of historical sense in the Israelite national character, if a purely mythical occurrence gave the keynote of the whole national life, and formed the starting-point of the entire circle of religious thought as early as the days of the first literary prophets." All the history is permeated by the thought of that supreme deliverance. And only a historical fact could impress itself thus indelibly on the national consciousness.

The absence from the Egyptian monuments of any clear reference to the sojourn of Israel in that land scarcely suffices to prove that it never occurred. They are equally silent concerning the incursion of the Shepherd Kings, or Hyksos, who settled in the Eastern Delta, and deeply influenced the history of Egypt. The war which issued in their expulsion is duly recorded. Are Egyptian Kings likely to refer to an event so disastrous to them? The Biblical narrative, which tells of a bondage so severe and degradation so deep, that the very memory of them was bitter, may certainly and favourably compare for credibility with inscriptions fond of recording conquest and ignoring defeat.

Striking is the silence in Scripture concerning the Egyptian sojourn. A few hints only as to their condition and action break that silence. It was service "with rigour" which "made their lives bitter"—a bondage cruel and crushing (Ex. i. 14, ii. 23, vi. 9), and which became an argument for leniency on their part ever after (Lev. xxv.; Deut. v. 15, vi. 21). Stanley (i. 84) finds in Leprosy a mark of that dark time—"generated by the habits incident to their depressed state and crowded population" (cf. Herzog, ii. 1304). Their religious life also had a dark side and lived as such in the memories of the nation (Josh. xxiv. 14; Ezek. xx. 8). This accords well with the subsequent history. What light would be thrown upon later history if the condition of the nation were fully portrayed? How far did their *rebellion* against Jehovah carry them into the service of the Egyptian "doll-images"? Oehler holds (i. 99) that "during the stay in Egypt the foundation was laid of the

religious syncretism which came up in different forms in the following centuries, and was in general characteristic of Israel, which never was independently productive in polytheistic forms of worship." Of the moral tone of Israel during this period we have no data. That long period which is passed over in silence (Ex. i. 8) must have been fruitful, unless all the conditions of human life be denied. It had its sunshine first, if deep shade followed. Those earlier years of prosperity were coincident with the palmy days of Egyptian art and science. The Pharaoh of the Oppression was probably Rameses II of the XIX dynasty, whose long reign of sixty-seven years filled Egypt with fortresses, obelisks, statues, &c. His works were accomplished by compulsory toil. He built "store-cities," one of which was called Rameses (Gen. xlvii. 11; Ex. i. 11; xii. 37). Possibly his extensive Asiatic campaigns dictated the policy of "subtle dealing" inaugurated by him (Ex. i. 10f) as the rapidly growing population on the Eastern border of Egypt would be a source of uncertainty and possibly of grave peril.

The conditions of Egypt then, unless the law of Environment be ignored, would naturally lead to the development of literary and artistic taste. Not far from the Hebrew settlement was On, or Heliopolis—"the Oxford of ancient Egypt, the seat of its learning in early times as Alexandria was in later times" (Stanley, i. 78). Is it not then a gratuitous supposition, that Israel left Egypt a rude and uncivilized horde? Is it conceivable that a nation possessing a *superior religious character* should reject all the better and assimilate all the worse elements? On the other hand, the history of religion being the

object of the Bible, would not a too ready and complete correspondence with their environment—their becoming secularized—explain the silence of the Scripture concerning this period? The ease and comfort of the earlier portion may account for the deterioration. And the bondage *may* have been the Divine method of checking that secularization. “Egypt, according to Delitzsch, became a secular preparatory school for its future national life and authorship” (Gen. 9 p.).

The whole history and literature of Israel can only be explained by the work and personality of Moses. Smend strongly asserts the historical value of the main incidents of the Exodus and of the life of Moses. These are absolutely necessary to account for early Israel, *and if not recorded would have to be postulated*. Nor does We. call in question his historical character and unique personality (43of). Cornill, too, while denying that we have any line of his or account of him earlier than 500 years after his own time, holds that “with Moses and his work began the history of the people of Israel;” and so deep was his influence that the religion of Israel conquered, even when assimilating the practices of Canaan! So potent was the Mosaic germ!

Schultz (i. 61) confidently assumes “that the people of Israel had a real national life even before Moses, perhaps one not without recollections of national glory, and that when Moses appeared, the better among the people already had a religion which could serve as the basis of the Mosaic, and the main features of which were retained in Mosaism.” The Judges make the strength and safety of the nation ever dependent on fidelity to Jehovah. Un-

faithfulness to Him undermined their power and made them the prey of the foe. We are told of rebellion against Jehovah in Egypt (Ezek. xx. 8, 24), which may explain their surrender to the Pharaoh oppression. The national consciousness had become enfeebled. The Exodus however is raised in Scripture above a mere human effort of a nation to regain its independence. It is unique, and not the culmination of a series of extraordinary exertions and powerful movements which had exhausted themselves. To Ewald it was such an effort of the people, but *according to Scripture it is the activity of Jehovah Himself*. JEHOVAH was the deliverer; Moses was but His agent. "Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron" (Ps. lxxvii. 20). "And Israel saw the great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the LORD: and they believed in the LORD, and in His servant Moses" (Exod. xiv. 31). This presents a totally different account from We. "The exigencies of their position severed a number of kindred clans from their customary surroundings, and drove them into his arms. He undertook the responsibilities of their leader, and the confidence of success which he manifested was justified by the result" (433). The Hebrew tradition is consistent in basing that national movement on Revelation. The great task performed by Moses can only be explained by its relation to the past. The slumbering consciousness awoke in response to Moses—"The LORD, the God of your fathers. . . . The LORD, the God of the Hebrews" sent him. That roused the enslaved people. The whole struggle which culminates in the Exodus is a war of gods, not of men—Jehovah and the gods of Egypt.

Though it may be precarious, in view of the scantiness of our data, to assert concerning the *national* life of the Hebrews in Egypt, their subsequent history is linked by a thousand threads to that cardinal event—The Exodus. It ever lived in the memories of the people as the birth of the nation, “This overwhelming moment created the people of Israel” (Cornill). We., arguing that this was the “properly creative period in Israel’s history,” says that their sense of *national personality* goes back to this time, “although there was no formal and binding constitution to give it support.” And after entering Canaan “they maintained their individuality, and that without the support of any external organization” (432). Earlier in his book (39), ridiculing the antiquity of the Priestly Code by maintaining that a historical situation has been created by the Editors of the Pent., to suit that Code *out of itself*, We. adds a forcible illustration—“Thus (so to speak) it holds itself up in the air by its own waist-band!!” That is decidedly an exercise in which certain critics are well versed! And now the sense of *national personality* is credited with like skill! The awakening of the national life was produced by the re-awakening of the religious life. The two may not be severed. Moses did not introduce a *new religion*. The God of their fathers he declared to them (Ex. iii. 15). This alone will explain the acceptance of his message by the people. There must have been links with their past. The author of Psalm lxxxi. describes it vividly. “The discourse of one I had not known did I hear”—so Cheyne translates and terms it “a mysterious way of expressing the supernatural nature of the speaker.” The discourse

ran—"I removed his shoulder from the burden, his hands escaped from the basket"—*i.e.*, the basket in which they carried the bricks. Delitzsch comments—"It was the language of a known, but still also unknown God, which Israel heard in the redemption of that period." It must also be remembered that the Exodus was the final issue of a Hebrew request for freedom to worship and sacrifice to the LORD their God (Ex. v. 1-3, viii. 25ff).

Now in the profound significance of that great historical event—The Exodus—may be found the key to the history of Israel. The GOD, Who chose their fathers, now shows His choice of themselves and appears for their deliverance. Exod. xix. speaks of One, Who, out of all the people at His command—"for all the earth is mine,"—revealed His mighty power to make them "a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." Thus a holy God enters into relationship with a people to make them holy. Such is the end in view. What are the means employed?

The acceptance of Critical results must materially affect the estimate of the relation of Moses to the Pent. (pp. 82ff). Tradition ascribed to him its entire contents excepting some chronological, geographical, and other notes added later to remove ambiguity. If it were argued that the Priestly Code were an *invention* of the Exilic period, it could not be entertained at all. To speak of such a Code as Mosaic would be simply to countenance a literary fraud, and to place in the forefront of a religion which is admitted to possess *from the first* a high moral character, the most flagrant instance of infringement of the laws of morality! "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God." Such a position, to say the least, is a sheer impossibility to the believer in Divine Revelation.

We are not asked however to accept such an extreme conclusion. It is true that we lose the sharp, definite outlines of the Traditional view. "It cannot be doubted, says Driver, "that Moses was the ultimate founder of both the national and religious life of Israel . . . and that he provided his people, not only with at least the nucleus of a system of civil ordinances, but also with some system of ceremonial observances, designed as the expression and concomitant of the religious and ethical duties involved in the people's relation to its national God" (Intro. 152).

What then is MOSAISM? It must not be forgotten that Hebrew Tradition ascribes the laws, civil and religious, to Moses. These Laws, summed up as *Mosaic Torah*, formed the Revelation of Jehovah to them. This Torah however is, according to Modern Criticism, considerably restricted. We. (438): "The *legislative* tradition cannot tell us what were the positive contents of *his* Torah." To a believer in Inspiration as a power illumining the mind of the writer, and for the purposes of God even enabling him to anticipate future conditions, that Moses, first among prophets, should legislate for the future, and even for differing social conditions, is *not of itself impossible*. To say however that anything is not impossible is not sufficient to establish its probability, much less its certainty. The discussion bears, not upon what God can or cannot do, but rather upon what He *did* do. Then again before JE has had opportunity of being tried, D, which is based upon it, is issued. And, moreover, we have the Divine Law given at the foundation of a nation's life, while throughout the centuries few traces

of its observance are found. It remained an ideal apparently. Any explanatory theory therefore must cover these conditions.

II.

THE fact that the Codes exhibit points of *contact* as well as *contrast*, suggests another solution. This again is supported by other considerations, which may not be ignored. We find Moses admitting to co-operation with himself, at the instance of Jethro, as rulers of the nation, "able men such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain." Thus was established a body of men, who sit for judicial purposes, and who apply to cases the principles laid down by Moses. Doubtlessly *cases* would be cited then as to-day as bases of judgment.

Coincident with that again would be the development of the nation, which passed through critical changes. At the Exodus a servile condition passed into free, nomad life. With the Conquest came settled life, and that again was developed in the course of the national history. Canaan was in truth the centre of the ancient world. War and commerce brought it into close relationship with foreign states. All became factors in their development. *Such a history must create needs varying with each age.* The Mosaic Law must therefore be adapted to that national life. This must take the form either of *anticipating* all possibilities with positive enactments, or of modifying existing laws to meet new needs. Some modification is postulated also by the Traditional view to harmonize Deut. with the preceding books.

Not the *social* conditions only suffered change, but also the *religious*. Still our knowledge of the actual state of the Palestinian races is not sufficiently full and clear to determine how far the ideas and customs of the Hebrews were originally derived from, or affected by their neighbours. Were the Hebrews so utterly devoid of all originality that they had *no evil habit of their own*? If so, the quality which Goethe regarded as fitting Israel to be the *chosen people*, viz., their *toughness*, must be abandoned for, or supplemented with *impressibility*. However, the erection of the Temple could not fail to modify past observances. If ritual and psalmody played such an important part in the Second Temple, would not such be the case in the First under Solomon, and far more probably than in post-exilic times? We have thus a body of men capable of judging, and the changing course of national history calling for the services of such a qualified body. This tribunal was probably composed of priests and lay-judges, and was located at the sanctuary (cf. Deut. 206ff).

The Israelitish literature consistently ascribes its fundamental laws to Mosaic origin. He was the founder of the legislation both civil and religious. A distinction must be drawn however between the institutions in the Mosaic and in the Pentateuchal forms. He was inspired to lay down a basis. That became the germ in which lay potentially the system of Law and Ritual afterwards elaborated and fully developed. Thus the seed was fructified by the seasons of national life—by adaptation to national needs. Ellicott finds it “not unreasonable to suppose that later observances, ritual and ceremonial, may have been added to the fundamental Mosaic observances,

and that the Law-book, especially in the less important details grew, as the Psalter in the later times of Jewish history." With him agrees Rawlinson that "minute additions may have been made to the Code, but it has no manifest marks of the Regal, much less of the Babylonian or Persian period." Thus the Rectified Traditional as well as the Conservative Critical views unite in rendering less definite the Mosaic limits.

The EXODUS is the *revelation in action* of Jehovah. That determined the future of Israel. They now became "the peculiar people" of Jehovah, which involved great privileges but also grave responsibilities. The purposes of that cardinal event were deep. An eminent feature of the Hebrew religion was its moral character, and that from the very beginning. They are Jehovah's and destined to become like Him. A covenant is made whereby they become "a peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." Now that consciousness—Jehovah with them and they His people—gave vitality to the Hebrew religion. "Pure theism is unable to form a living religion. Mahomedanism lost all religious power in a few generations" (Westcott). It was not belief in the doctrine of One God, but in the supreme activity of Jehovah in their midst that gave vitality to Judaism.

The unity of the nation lies therefore in its religion, and politics and religion are interwoven. Hence the lawgiver lays down a code of Ethics and of Ritual. The peculiar people of Jehovah must in life and worship present a contrast to the heathen. And both these were dependent upon each other. The worship of the TRUE

GOD, and that under no material form must be exhibited. That imageless worship would condemn idolatry, while the purity attending it would also condemn immorality. A spiritual and holy God Israel was to serve, and in serving to reveal His character.

Hence we have an IDEAL—a holy nation—"Be ye holy, for I am holy." Religion and life are blended on a high level. The Ideal is embodied in the Decalogue, which stands forth as the highest and holiest expression of the duties of man to God and of man to man. It is contended however that this is too high to be put at the *beginning* of the history, and must be the issue of experience and prophetic teaching. We find it better to date it from the time of Manasseh—that age of lawlessness and utter disregard of moral restraint! And to him Judges v. is a better expression of the old religion than Exod. xx. (486). That begs the question that earlier are necessarily ruder than later times. But what then of *environment*? Is such an age as that of Manasseh the probable soil for such a growth? If it was *then* the product of Inspiration, why not earlier? That the Law was not realized in the life of the people is clear. That that proves the non-existence of the Law is not consequent, else we must deny its existence *at all periods*. The issuing of a law and the realization of it in life must be distinguished, especially so where we have Revelation.

To embody that ideal and secure the realization of it would require prescription of *forms*. *The ritual was never given for its own sake*. It was ever means to an end. Every part was symbolical, and was calculated to impress the Jew with the unique greatness of Jehovah and His

requirements of His people. It is noteworthy that the Law speaks not of righteousness, but always of holiness. The end of all is not the fulfilment of a round of duties, but assimilation of character. The idea of worship is personal—God with man. Jehovah comes to man. He takes the initiative and reveals Himself. The thought of man *of himself* elaborating a conception of God is utterly foreign to the Old Test. Jehovah called them out of Egypt, and with His mighty arm made them His own. The relation is throughout personal, based on revelation. Hence the moral is ever all-important, and the ritual is of value only as means, but valueless when becoming the end. As aids towards the conception of the Ideal, and also as contributing towards its realization, Ritual was necessary. The distinction drawn in the Law between sins of ignorance and wilful, presumptuous sins becomes suggestive on this matter. For the former an atonement could be made, but not for the latter. This was not arbitrary. The latter rendered it simply impossible for the Divine Ideal ever to be realized.

Necessarily then two such lines would be laid down by the great legislator—each in its own order. The subsequent history of the people and of their literature may be termed the record of these two; or rather the history of that relation to which Ethics and Ritual bear witness,—in other words the history of religion. If then an original nucleus were laid down at first by Moses himself as the basis of the future, even this would require a priesthood and ritual instructions. The difficulty of apprehending the purely spiritual, and the influence of surrounding ideas and practices, could not fail to reveal the need of

fuller guidance. Nor was the mind of the people emptied of its religious contents. Moses did not create the religion. It was an inheritance. How difficult it is to transmit such an inheritance uncorrupted may be illustrated from all ages. Hence modifications arise of necessity, not arbitrarily. The Decalogue contains in germ every principle for human conduct. Its comprehensive character is no less marvellous than its brevity and conciseness. This is the character of O. T. religion. That *universality* however is said to be too advanced for the Mosaic age. The *particularism* of Israel's religion is urged as an argument against its Mosaic origin. We. (438): "As God of the nation, Jehovah became the God of justice and right; as God of justice and right, He came to be thought of as the highest, and at last as the only, power in heaven and earth." Such is the history of the idea of God! Why should the idea of God take that course among the Hebrews and not among others also? A fundamental thought however is the choice of Israel by Jehovah. Such is ever the method of representing it, and not the choice of Jehovah by Israel. Such a choice, if at all real, "from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine," pervades the O. T., and implies universal sovereignty. Nor does it involve the surrender of that sovereignty. The selection is for a specific purpose which involves universal issues (Gen. xii. 3, xviii. 18, xxii. 18). A God of universal power unqualified by righteousness is an intolerable, impossible thought.

That Moses should have issued a high standard of morals is not disproved by the failure of the people then or later to realize it. The religious poetry of the Baby-

lonians teaches a far nobler doctrine than the life of the people. So also the Egyptians fell far short of realizing the morality inculcated by their religion. Must the character of the teaching of Jesus stand or fall by the lives and practices of Christians? The history of the Christian Church clearly shows that it requires no great length of time for the passions and circumstances of men to dim the truth of God. The Hebrew history, recording as defections the acts of the people, and condemning them therefor, implies the possession of such a standard. The evil of the one stands revealed by the purity of the other. And the picture bears the impress of truth. If *idealized* at all, why not still further embellish the characters so as to remove all failure to touch the ideal? The work of the prophets is admitted, and also that the national life in the main failed to assimilate it; must we in that case deny their activity and teaching?

That fundamental Mosaic teaching we find further developed on two lines—the prophetic in D, and the priestly in P. The former naturally lays stress on the moral and spiritual, the latter on the ritual and ceremonial. The comparative silence of D concerning priesthood and sacrifices thus finds explanation. Such laws would be found naturally in the Code of the Priests.

How far, if indeed at all, the sojourn in Egypt determined the *forms* of the Hebrew religion is debatable. Yet such external resemblances need create no difficulty. It is not contrary to Divine methods to utilize existing human conditions. That the customs and institutions of Israel should have points of affinity with other Semitic nations is less marvellous than the higher level of purpose

to which they are raised. The conditions of Egypt possibly operated by contrast rather than by assimilation. The Hebrew conception of God and of man far surpass the Egyptian. Noticeable, however, is the absence of teaching concerning Future Life from the Pent., compared with its prominence in Egypt's religion. Belief in continued existence after death is not absent from the O. T., but it lies in the back, not in the fore-ground. It does not suffice to say that this silence is due to the undeveloped state of the doctrine of *Individuality*, and that the immortality of the *nation as such* would exercise no powerful bearing on *individual* action. From the Call of Abram, at least, the relation of the Individual to God and to men, finds place in the O. T. In Egypt supreme importance was attached to a future life and the judgment which ushered it in (Renouf. Hibb. Lect. v.). The superstitions attached to it however may have occasioned the silence of the Pent. It is not denied, but simply overshadowed by the nearness of Jehovah to them—*the Lord in the midst of thee*. That was to be their animating motive. It may be asked on the other hand—If the Pent. was the production of Exilic or Post-exilic times, is not this omission strange? Else with what exquisite care did this late editor project his own ideas and those of his age into that distant past? Is all this mere literary skill or simple history?

Thus Mosaism includes ethics and ritualism, *the one for the other*. “Positive institutions,” says Butler, “are means to a moral end: and the end must be acknowledged more excellent than the means. Nor is observance of these institutions any religious obedience at all, or of any value,

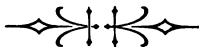
otherwise than as it proceeds from a moral principle" (Anal. pt. ii., ch. i.). From this point flows on the history of Israel. Mankind has always been prone to lodge the value of religion in certain positive rites to the neglect of, and as equivalent for, obedience to moral precepts. The means become the end. Degeneration then rapidly ensues. Under the combined influences of this inward tendency and of a corrupt environment was produced that condition found in the Prophets. Hence these lay stress on the Ethical side of Mosaism. Their scathing words concerning rites are due to the inordinate stress laid upon them by the nation. Ritualism had overshadowed morality. Oehler (i. 390) puts the matter tersely: "Mosaism says, Piety approves itself in sacrifice; Prophecy says, Sacrifice is approved only by piety." The soul of the ritual is the piety; and the soul of that is Jehovah with men.

The prophets throughout only strive after the ideal of Moses. Their task is to clear the mind of the nation of its false conception of God—of religion and life, and to restore that ideal period when God led His people out of Egypt—the bridal day of the nation. *The conception of God is one throughout.* The consciousness of the Hebrew prophets is that Jehovah has revealed Himself to them. To them the question is not—Is God knowable? That lies beyond all doubt. God hath spoken—such is ever the word of the prophets, and implies that their message is not their own creation but the gift of God to them. Much as their age and their own individual qualities may contribute to the *form* of their thought, we stand here in the presence of something far higher. "Nothing," says

Kittel (i. 252) "but an immediate contact of God Himself with man can produce the true knowledge of God or bring man a real step nearer thereto. For in himself man finds only the world and his own individuality. Neither the one nor the other of these leads beyond heathenism; that to a lower, this to a higher form." Hence there pervades the Old Test. the great thought, not of the discovery, but of the revelation of Jehovah. There on that exalted plane the birth of the Hebrew nation took place, and the consciousness of it lives on through their history.

It is vain to argue that Moses' merely started a religious development which culminated in the VIII B.C. Our knowledge of the nations akin to Israel at this period is so limited, that it cannot be proved that Moses found them on that low level. But even if it were granted, the difficulty still remains—Whence did Moses get his idea, and how did the people give it acceptance? Further, the history of the Hebrews, while displaying a religious development, exhibits it as secured *in spite of their tendencies*, against their own nature. It moves ever towards a clearer apprehension of God as holy, and His people as being like Him. The history of heathen religions on the other hand drifts with their nature to deeper depths. In that stress on morality, Israel's religion manifests not a difference of degree, but of *kind* from all others. The religion of Greece received its death-blow, when the moral consciousness of the Greek philosophers criticised the immoral character of its gods. Religion and morality there parted company. Among the Jews these two are ever wedded from the beginning. *Ethical monotheism is the very base and*

heart of their religion. Thus while the development of the moral nature went among the heathen *against* their religion, among the Jews it issued in a better appreciation of their God, and in a deeper realization of the evil of sin. The language of the Prophets and Psalmists, rather than the life of the nation, gives the truer conception of the religion of Jehovah.



THE PATRIARCHAL AND PRIMEVAL AGES.

"Thou, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend."

"When he was but one I called him, and I blessed him, and made him many."

ISAIAH.

"The Patriarchal Age is not in itself the beginning of the history of the Jewish Church, or nation. That has its origin from Moses. But the more primitive is the necessary prelude of that history, because it contains the earliest distinct beginnings of the Jewish Religion and of the Jewish race."

STANLEY.

"All monotheistic religions derive their origin from Abraham."

WESTCOTT.

"The Patriarchal period, especially that of Abraham, must be regarded as the necessary presupposition for the Mosaic period. The religious position of Moses stands before us unsupported and incomprehensible unless we believe the tradition according to which he appealed to the God of their fathers."

KITTEL.

"The Creation is the presupposition of all subsequent history, and at the same time God's first act of revelation."

DILLMANN.

"Heathen religion denied or ignored the oneness and the spirituality of God—in its departure that is, from primitive monotheism, and its deification of the forces of nature."

T. C. EDWARDS.

"The Bible is the oldest and truest vindication of the dignity of History."

WESTCOTT.

THE PATRIARCHAL AND PRIMEVAL AGES.

I.

MOSES appeared thus, not as the founder of a new religion, but as the builder of a nation upon the basis of an old religion. He proclaimed to the enslaved Hebrews the Lord God of their fathers, and that enabled him to uplift and deliver them. That awaking of religious life, which drew the people together, presupposes some knowledge of JEHOVAH. Montefiore thinks (4 p.) that "the rule that all origins are obscure is nowhere more true than in the religious history of Israel." To him therefore the patriarchs are not historical personalities, but legendary heroes. "Behind Moses there stretches back the dark and limitless prehistoric age. But with Moses the historic period begins" (54). If so, great, indeed, must have been the genius of Moses! If we accept the words—"Jehovah, the God of your fathers, hath sent me unto you"—*i.e.*, believe that behind Moses lay a religion already become part of the people's consciousness, the Exodus is intelligible. Without that it stands forth manifestly a miracle in all its relations. The Hebrew tradition finds in the Patriarchs the origin of their religion.

Carlyle taught that the soul of the whole world's history was the history of Great Men. Room must be found for

the play of great personalities in the history of religion. The turning-points of the Hebrew nation never lacked great men to guide it. Each draws from, and also contributes his portion to, its spiritual wealth. The very greatness of Moses and of his work postulates a past. Others, who went before him, received a word from Jehovah. Hebrew tradition ever points to the migration of Abram, at the call of Jehovah, as the beginning. That formed part of the religious stock of the Hebrews always, and as such must have value and prevent conclusions too sweeping. Moses based his mission on their relationship to Jehovah, Who sent him forth to them.

“Of the beginnings of religion (every religion) we know nothing. Prehistoric history is the monopoly of those who have a theory to defend” (Aubrey More, in *Lux Mundi*, 47). Where can that frontier-line be drawn? Montefiore knows no hesitation. The Patriarchal period to him “remains a prehistoric age, in which so far as direct evidence goes, the outward events and the inward spiritual development are alike unknown” (13f). Such a conclusion is not altogether free from difficulties. The analysis of Genesis into its component strands places side by side some coincident matter. Now the common testimony of divergent traditions offers presumptive proof of its truth, and forbids its being too readily dissolved into mere legend. Having made Moses a shadowy personality, naturally what lies behind is still more shadowy. This rests on the assumption that the early stages of this, as of all national history, are wrapped in myth and legendary lore, emerging gradually thence into the historic stage. Between event and record stretch, we are informed, from

five to ten centuries! The narratives were written about the X or VIII B.C., and therefore, according to Schultz, "can give us no real information about the religious circumstances of the times of Abraham and Jacob. We can] only say in what light Israel was wont to look back at the religious circumstances of its earliest age. No original authorities for the period before Moses have come down to us" (i. 62)! Now even if it be granted that the Jehovistic narrative—The Oldest Book of Hebrew History—was *committed to writing* in the IX or VIII B.C., it represents the conflation of two strands, which had existed separately and circulated, J in the Southern and E in the Northern Kingdom (cf. p. 34). The origins must therefore date considerably farther back. The word *Tradition* also must be delivered from a *necessarily unreliable conception*, and must be regarded as capable of transmitting through a long period valuable information without impairing its trustworthiness. And still further, is it so absolutely certain that Moses did not actually possess *written records* of the past? The question for the moment refers not to the extant Pent., but to the sources at its base. It has also been seen that Archæological discoveries have proved the *possibility* of writing far before the age of Moses—a conclusion fully admitted also by Modern Critics (pp. 91ff).

But whether dependent on oral or written sources, it is held that these have been edited, and the bias of the redactor has *dressed* the history to suit his purpose. The religious view of the editor has thus injuriously affected the history. But the question is, if in using the facts he has misused, distorted, or misinterpreted them. "It is

true," says We. (319), "we attain to no historical knowledge of the patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them arose in the Israelite people; this later age is here unconsciously projected in its inner and its outward features, into hoar antiquity, and is reflected there like a glorified image." Verily here is a mirage! That this late editor can "project" himself across the centuries and depict, without ever betraying himself, those primitive times, seems to savour not of *unconsciousness*, but of highest consciousness—of that Art which is able to conceal itself! This, moreover, ventures, without proof, to throw "hoar antiquity" between the events and the stories. One thing is certain, that this *idealizing* tendency has left a natural, and even a strange picture. In the region of myth and legend, the authors could have given themselves the rein, and created pictures fanciful and faultless. Here, however, the heroes are but men, and their defects are unsparingly revealed, while in the narrative even their ancestor Jacob is shown at a disadvantage when compared with Esau! Strange idealizing this! (Note XLI.). This evidently suits a presentation of facts better than an idealized picture.

The simplicity and matter-of-fact character of these early narratives impress their truth on the mind, and form an insuperable objection to the various representations of the Patriarchal stories formed after abandoning their historical character. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have been converted by some into names of Tribal deities. This is pure conjecture for which no evidence has been adduced. Again, they become mere impersonations of qualities or types of characters, not real persons. And

yet again they stand not for individuals but for Tribes or nations, as Jacob for the Jews and Esau for the Edomites. The story of the twin-birth thus merely represents the alliance of these peoples, and the wanderings of the patriarchs simply impersonate national movements (cf. We. 318ff; Kittel, i. 168f; Kuenen, i. 109ff). May we not even of these theories cite We.'s own words—"the free creation of unconscious art" (320), hesitating, however, between "conscious" and "unconscious?" *Idealized history*, according to the late Canon Liddon, involves an inspiration of *unveracity*. And if *idealize* is equivalent to *create*, that must be admitted. But if *idealize* simply means writing for a definite purpose, that does not necessitate that the facts so used have been tampered with. It may, however, be said that no sufficient reason has yet been advanced for abandoning the historical character of the Patriarchal age. The narratives bear the impress of truth. In all essential matters the early traditions of Israel can sustain the keenest criticism. (Note XLII.).

Though the evidence of the monuments has not hitherto contributed much to directly confirm the Patriarchal narratives, there are points of contact. One of these is of singular interest, and gives us "a glimpse of the general history of the world in the twentieth century B.C., such as is nowhere else vouchsafed us in the Bible" (Hommel, 148). Gen. xiv. has been declared to be a pure invention to glorify Abram as a man of war! The story is that of a night-surprise of the marauding party, and not of an arrayed battle in open field. Modern excavations also have established such Elamite enter-

prises in Western Asia. It is true that language and contents distinguish this chapter from the rest, and its archaic features led Dillmann to regard it as of Canaanite origin (Gen. ii. 33). It is an old-world document revealing contact with non-Israelite accounts, and suggestive of materials at the hand of the author of Genesis.

With Abraham, therefore, we stand at the fountain of the religious history. Here part the Hebrew and other Semitic conceptions. He is the founder of the Hebrew religion and father of the faithful. Never does Abraham speak of Jehovah as the God of his father or fathers (cf. Gen. xxiv. 12, xxvi. 24, xxxi. 42; Ps. xlvii. 9). This accords fully with Josh. xxiv. 2; Gen. xxxi. 30, xxxv. 2, where his ancestors are represented as idolatrous. Cutting himself adrift from such associations, he stands forth as the re-introducer into the world of *the idea of worship*. "All ancient religion as distinguished from the primitive, laboured under the total inability of even conceiving the idea of the *worship of God*" (Mozley, 2). The want of power to realize that there can be but One God, without losing Him in impersonality, had pressed upon men. Acknowledging but One God in theory, in practice they served many. To the Patriarch, nobler and clearer thoughts came. Jehovah called him, and he obeyed—went out, not knowing whither he went. That Call sundered him from his environment. The deep truths that fastened upon his mind were the Unity and Justice of God—the Judge of all the earth must do right. Universal sway must be wedded to unswerving righteousness. Mozley infers further that Gen. xviii. 17ff, "represents the founder of a religious community, whose future adherence to the

true faith he was anxious to secure by proper regulations" (19).

The exalted conception, which Abraham had of Jehovah and of his duty to Him, as well as the influence of his associations upon him are reflected in Gen. xxii. That reveals at once the strength of his faith and also the need of sharply defining the superiority of Jehovah to other gods. Revelation is ever adjusted to the capacity and mode of thought of the recipient. It was always for the age and had an immediate purpose. Hence we find complications in the Biblical characters. They are men of their age, sharing the ideas of their fellows and yet drawn away by the voice of Jehovah. Step by step He leads them upwards—making Himself heard in their consciences. Around him Abraham found the Semitic religions touching their climax in human sacrifice. His devotion to his God will not fail to reach an equal height, and he withheld not his only son. That *inwardly-completed* sacrifice exhibits complete self-surrender to God as His inalienable right. That *arrested* sacrifice witnessed to the immeasurable difference between other religions and that of Jehovah. The price of obedience and human life are taught together. Such practices may still prevail elsewhere, but are for ever excluded from Hebrew worship.

Thus we find at this early, initial stage, the same features that ever present themselves—One God and He Righteous. Such a God makes Abram His servant and friend, disciplining him for high purposes—ends that are far-reaching; for "in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Gen. xii. 3, xxii. 18).

II.

IN Abraham we find the knowledge of Jehovah entrusted to one person, one family, one nation. It is particularism but leading to a universal goal. The necessity for this lies in the primeval ages. And herein we find two great epochs, in which Universalism was tried and proved a failure. Both these epochs commenced with one ancestor of the race—at the Creation and after the Flood; and the history records a declension from a higher level. In Abraham one person is called out of the many to cherish the truth of God. The preservation of that truth forms the history of religion.

The question for consideration now is the character of these early narratives. Are they reliable records of historical events? Or are they legendary tales of pre-historic times? It will be recognized at once that portions—such as the Story of the Creation of the Universe, and of the First Man—lie necessarily beyond the domain of mere history. Thither human observation could not penetrate. “The creation of the world was certainly never a matter of human experience” (Dillmann, 28 p.). Whence then was the story derived? Was it given primarily by revelation to Adam, and thus became the common property of the race, preserved uncorrupted in Jewish circles, but elsewhere adulterated? Or was the revelation made to Moses, when writing the Pent., to serve as a preface to the history? Neither of these views presents any difficulty of *power* to the believer in Divine Revelation. At the same time it may be asked if that, so

far as we learn from Scripture itself, has been the method adopted by God to educate mankind? It is self-evident that the Book was designed for practical, not theoretical purposes (2 Tim. iii. 16f). It was the revelation of God to men *of that age* first of all, in order that they might know God and serve Him. What purpose then *for that age* would such a revelation serve? If it was given *for future ages*, even though it be held with Dillmann that, of all the ancient cosmogonies, the Mosaic comes nearest to modern science, it may be reverently asked, if the presence of REVELATION would not necessarily exclude any possible conflict between it and Science. The two accounts of the Creation preserved side by side in Genesis i., ii., also in that case present difficulties. Under such conditions, is it not reasonable to infer that *in itself*, the story should be *one* and also that the increasing knowledge of man of the marvellous secrets of the Universe should fall more and more into line with the story of Genesis? It must however be admitted that all attempts to harmonize the opening chapters of Gen. with the conclusions of Modern Science have hitherto failed. Are they actually contradictory, or do they move on different planes? That sublime chapter—Gen. i.—may not at will be divided into literal and symbolical. Who can trace that *scientific frontier*? If its *days* become extended into *vast periods*, the literal character has already disappeared. Who then can dictate where interpretation must stop short of making it a *Creation-Poem*?

It is certainly hazardous and irreverent to assert that the Spirit of God could not, or would not use even the meditations of men themselves upon that great theme for

His own purposes. If, when the story of the inspired author was being framed, such traditions were current, is it not to limit the Holy One of Israel to maintain that He *could not use these*, while purifying them of all dross? Christ Himself did not disdain to employ pictures to express Divine truth.

The earliest ages were evidently times of great mental activity, and the minds of thoughtful men must exercise themselves upon the origin of the Universe and of Man. Traditions of that far distant time are found in almost every nation and offer as many varieties. Interesting however above all others in this relation is the Assyrian cosmogony, because of its many points of contact with the Hebrew. Babylonian excavation has unearthed clay-tablets dating about 2500 B.C., containing the story of the Creation in *seven acts*, recorded on seven tablets. The sixth has been lost and the others are not perfect. Now between these and Genesis there are points of striking similarity and of suggestive dissimilarity. And the relation between them is of intense interest. "The Biblical writer, it is plain, is acquainted, either directly or indirectly, with the Assyrian and Babylonian tradition. With him it is stripped of all that was distinctively Babylonian and polytheistic, and is become in his hands a sober narrative, breathing a spirit of the purest and most exalted monotheism. In passing from the Assyrian poem to the Biblical narrative, we seem to pass from romance to reality. But this ought not to blind us to the fact that the narrative is ultimately of Babylonian origin" (Sayce, 77f). The Biblical story separates the Creator from the creation. The latter is the fruit of His energy

and activity and of His alone. The One God, Maker of all, is here impressing His will on all and His image on man. There is present a sublime conception of Jehovah, which makes the *difference* between the two versions more palpable even than the *likeness*. Polytheism and mythology are alike excluded from the Hebrew.

One of the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets referred to (pp. 92f; cf. Note XXVIII.) bears an endorsement that it came from that Babylonian library, whence the greater number of the Creation Tablets came. This suggests that even in Egypt in XV B.C. Babylonian documents were studied fully a *century before Moses*! *Sixteen centuries after* the first recorded expedition of Babylonians to the West, Abram migrated into Canaan, and *many centuries before the Exodus*, the whole Western region as far as the Sea was leavened by their material and mental culture (Hilprecht). This explains at once the points of affinity between the Hebrews and the Babylonians. Moreover, it was their original home. Abram came from Ur of the Chaldees—a seat of great literary development. There then traditions were already current. It is not inconceivable therefore that these formed part of the mental and spiritual stock of the Patriarch. The age of the Assyrian Tablets forbids their having been derived from the Hebrew record, even if Mosaic. On the other hand it is equally untenable that the Jews derived them during their Exile in Chaldæa. The exclusiveness of the Jews, together with their hatred of their captors, renders it impossible that they borrowed religious ideas from them. “What we have then in these remarkable chapters is a manifestation of selective inspiration, under which, it

may be, in the first instance the Father of the Faithful bore away with him from Chaldæa the early and truthful form of the primeval tradition " (Ellicott).

The origin of that primitive tradition is still left untouched. The discussion bears on the record. Schultz (i. 19) holds that, unless we regard Israel "as crippled in one of the noblest attributes of nationality," we must admit "legend" in these early stages. But if that be admitted, it will remain to be explained, why the Patriarchs, who move in this legendary, mythical world, are depicted as so *very human*? They are simple men, not mythical personages or possessed of Divine qualities. In this they form a perfect contrast to the allied traditions, and bear the impress of verisimilitude. The Hebrew people, according to Cornill, were the only nation that never had a mythology. The characters playing their part in this history are too sharply defined, and have features too human, to be relegated into the region of myth and legend.

The great features of the Biblical story are impressed on its earlier as well as its later stages. At the Creation—that first great self-manifestation of Jehovah—God enters into covenant with Man. The Fall follows—that sublime picture of the nature and consequences of disobedience. Degeneration ensues and leads the way to grievous punishment. The issues of human history ever depend on *ethical* considerations. After the Flood, the race starts once more with covenant-relation to Jehovah. Again declension follows, and the race is scattered over the face of the earth with language confounded. In Abraham Jehovah elects the *one* to prepare for the many. Henceforward there are ever present the consciousness of

Jehovah as the God of their fathers and of His own choosing love, as well as of the tendency to yield to other and lower motives. The history is the record of the struggle between that tendency and that consciousness in the bosom of the chosen nation.

Two conflicting theories offer solution of the Biblical problem. One claims for itself a coherence, in regarding religion as a development in a straight line upwards. From a lower level common to all others the Hebrew religion has moved upwards to a position perfectly unique. Stress is laid here on the human element to the exclusion of the Divine. The consciousness of the nation however testified to throughout all the writings, as well as the impelling force which raised the Hebrew above all other religions demand explanation. However much may be achieved by eliminating the supernatural, far greater difficulties still await solution. The other postulates revelation as fundamental. It has regard to the full play of both the Human and Divine elements, and to the fact that they necessarily limit and modify each other. *God reveals Himself to Man and through Man.* The fuller recognition, which the Human element receives in the present day, while an unquestionable gain in many respects, has in others occasioned great difficulties. "Perhaps," says Westcott, "the result of the most careful inquiry will be to bring the conviction that many problems of the highest interest as to the origin and relation of the constituent Books are insoluble." This, however, will not relieve us of the duty of diligent

investigation. The difficulties attending the study owing to the character of the subject,—as well as the fragmentaries of our information concerning important details, of necessity exclude dogmatism.

We plead for an intelligent appreciation of the difficulties of an age, the abundance of whose privileges is its great peril. Let the Church, and especially its ministry, strive earnestly to qualify itself to meet the needs of such an age, with intelligence and sympathy, but also with conviction deep and immovable. No theory is adequate to explain the history of Israel, which fails to discover a specific difference between that and other religions of the ancient world. The believer in the RISEN CHRIST must recognize such a difference, and in the fulness of the twofold nature of his Living Lord will find an ever-abiding illustration of the perfect union of the Divine and Human. Let not the Church rob itself of the wealth of its inheritance on both these sides.

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

Let *knowledge* grow from more to more,
But more of *reverence* in us dwell.

And with knowledge growing thus, and reverence ever keeping pace with it, we shall discover more and more, that the Word of GOD is a very human book, and that its very humanity is filled with a power, which ever with a delicate but constant and powerful pressure is raising men upwards to the Ideal of GOD.

“THE WORD OF THE LORD ABIDETH FOR EVER.”

NOTES.

NOTES.

NOTE I.—p. 7.

Frequent quotations have been made from the *Hibbert Lectures* of 1892 by Mr. C. G. Montefiore, M.A., on the "Origin and Growth of Religion, as illustrated by the religion of the Ancient Hebrews." These, together with the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, amply illustrate the statement that the new criticism has deeply affected the Jewish Church. "The old faith," says Montefiore, "cannot consort with the new criticism. The contradiction is obvious and insuperable. Either criticism or creed must be abandoned." And yet, though conscious of this, the fullest critical results are fully accepted!

NOTE II.—p. 8.

O. T. J. C. 233f: "The discrepancy between the Traditional view of the Pentateuch and the plain statements of the historical books and the Prophets is so marked and so fundamental, that it can be made clear to every reader of Scripture. It is this fact which compels us, in the interests of practical theology—nay, even in the interest of Christian apologetic—to go into questions of Pentateuchal Criticism." And it is farther declared that, through the operations of the critic, "the apparent discordance between the several parts of the Old Testament record is removed, and we are able to see a consistent divine purpose ruling the whole dispensation of the Old Covenant, and harmoniously displayed in every part of the sacred record."

NOTE III.—p. 9.

The Jewish Church recognized 22 books, "justly believed to be divine." Of these, "5 belong to Moses, which contain his laws, and the traditions of the origins of mankind till his death" (Josephus). Prophets continued that history in 13 books, each narrating what was done in his own time.

The *Rectified* view of Ellicott makes Genesis a compilation by Moses, Exodus and Leviticus written by him, or under his supervision, Numbers compiled under his oversight, Deut. the work of Joshua. Joshua is a compilation from narratives and official records under his direction, Judges by Samuel from similar sources. Samuel and Kings are also compilations and the works of successive prophets from Samuel to Jeremiah. Chronicles, based on Kings, or the same sources, came probably from Ezra, while Ezra and Nehemiah are by those persons, based on personal history and other documents. The Prophetical writings bear the names of their respective authors. The historical books have however been edited and revised, with the addition of numerous notes. The influence of modern research is evident here.

NOTE IV.—p. 12.

Briggs (*Biblical Study*, 78ff) : "Criticism is the test of the certainty of knowledge, the method of its verification. It examines the products of human thinking and working, and tests them by the laws of thought and of history. It eliminates the false, the uncertain, the unsubstantial from the true, the certain and the substantial." Hence Criticism has both a constructive and destructive side. Hitherto, owing to the accretions of errors, its task has been mainly destructive. That however can never be true criticism, which destroys for destruction's sake, and not rather for *re*-construction.

NOTE V.—p. 12.

In Faraday's true scientist we have also the true critic. He is one "willing to listen to every suggestion, but determined to judge for himself; not biassed by appearances, with no favourite hypotheses, of no school, and in doctrine having no master; not a respecter of persons, but of things, with truth for his primary object, and with industry superadded" (*Life*, i. 225).

NOTE VI.—p. 13.

According to Kuenen (*The Religion of Israel*, i. 20ff) the belief in the miraculous and the credibility of the Old Test. hang together. Miracles must receive the evidence of eye-witnesses to be regarded as genuine. Such witness however is impossible in the case of the Old Test. "The representation of Israel's earliest history presented to us in the books named after Moses and Joshua must be rejected as

in its entirety impossible. Prejudice alone can deny that the miracles related in the same writings must be rejected at the same time." Dr. A. B. Bruce argues in *The Miraculous Element in the Gospels* that "philosophic bias, not strict science, is the mother of much current unbelief. It is easily possible to occupy such a philosophical attitude that no amount of evidence will convince of miracle."

NOTE VII.—p. 18.

Nowhere is the religion of the O. T. represented as the outcome of human experience and meditation. It is significant that the existence of God is taken for granted. "As Scripture nowhere contemplates men as ignorant of the existence of God, it nowhere depicts the rise or dawn of the idea of His existence in men's minds" (B. D. ii. 196). The religious leaders in Israel are always *prophets*, which implies revelation or communion between God and man. Justice cannot be dealt to the study of the O. T. without giving place to this as a fundamental element.

NOTE VIII.—p. 21.

The oldest extant MS. of the entire O. T. dates only from 1010 A.D. A MS. of the Prophets is dated a century earlier—916 A.D. The majority of the Hebrew MSS. are from XII to XVI A.D. A long roll of centuries has thus passed between the earliest extant MS. and the latest O. T. book. In the VI to VIII A.D. a body of Hebrew scholars took measures to preserve the text and made notes of the number of the verses, words, and even letters of a book. Valuable though their services were, the text is carried back only to II A.D. The LXX (or the Greek version of the O. T., made in Egypt in III and II B.C.) shows much divergence from the Massoretic text. The LXX is preserved in early MSS. of IV A.D. Being the work of several authors and of different dates, it is thus of unequal merit. After admitting that the translation was influenced by ignorance of Hebrew, by Alexandrian modes of thought, and by the difficulty of transferring Hebrew thought into Greek, enough remains to prove that the Hebrew original differed materially from the Massoretic text. Often-times the Greek Version throws a flood of light on the difficulties of the Hebrew. Uniformity of text naturally followed the Massoretic operations, but these, owing to their late date, afford no guarantee that their labours restored the text to the true original, and did not rather perpetuate errors already existing. Hence the work of the Lower or Textual Critic is not yet at an end.

NOTE IX.—p. 22.

Dr. Salmon (*Introduction to the New Test.*, p. 3) shows by illustrations that "if we were to apply to the remains of Classical Literature the same rigour of scrutiny that is used towards the New Testament, there are but few of them that could stand the test." One allusion, and that by no means clear and definite, of 300 years later than Tacitus himself (61-117 A.D.) suffices to make his *Annals* pass as authentic, even though the work itself is extant only in a single MS. of the XV A.D. ! cf. Lessing, quoted p. 2. Why should not the Bible be treated as another book in this respect ?

NOTE X.—p. 24.

The Hebrew Canon agrees with the English Bible in contents, but the arrangement differs in several respects. It is divided into three great divisions, each of which represents the process of Canonization. This presupposes two stages—the completion of each book within each section, and also that sufficient time has elapsed after its composition for the mind of the Church to familiarize itself with it, and decide upon its value as Scripture. Canonization was not, in the case of either Old or New Test., the work of any Council, but of the Church's conscience and experience. As the LXX, our earliest witness, was completed by 132 B.C., the Third part of the Hebrew Canon must have been finished some time previously. The Second was complete also in III B.C., and the First in V B.C.

- I. THE LAW ; or Pentateuch, contains Genesis-Deuteronomy.
- II. THE PROPHETS : (a) Former Prophets ; or 4 historical books—Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings. (b) Latter Prophets ; or 4 prophetic books—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Minor Prophets.
- III. THE WRITINGS ; Hagiographa, or Sacred Scriptures—11 books subdivided into 3 groups. (a) 3 Poetical Books—Psalms, Proverbs, Job. (b) 5 Rolls (or Megilloth—each a separate roll for use in Synagogue on certain anniversaries)—Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther. (c) 3 other books—Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles.

NOTE XI.—p. 29.

The author of the *Clementine Homilies* represents Peter as saying : "The Law of God was given by Moses, without writing, to 70 wise men, to be handed down." After Moses died some one wrote it, because how could Moses write of his own death ? (Deut. xxxiv. 8.) And as it was

found lying in the Temple afterwards, and 500 years later was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, Moses proved his fore-knowledge in not writing it! (*Homily 3, xlvii.*).

NOTE XII.—p. 34.

Addis (*The Documents of the Hexateuch*, vol. i., p. iv): "Of course for the settlement of many points the reader must go to the more elaborate investigations of Old Testament critics. Nevertheless the main division of the documents only needs presentation to become self-evident. Moreover even when we have been thoroughly convinced that the methods of modern criticism are sound, we shall, I think, experience something akin to surprise at the striking manner in which the results of this criticism stand out clear and consistent, when exhibited as a whole and set before the eye."

NOTE XIII.—p. 40.

In the comparison here instituted between the Law and History, the First and Second sections of the Hebrew Canon only are involved. This is due to the fact that the PSALMS are relegated to an Exilic or Post-exilic date by some critics. So much uncertainty indeed rests upon their times that they are not here cited in evidence on *either* side. If the traditional authorship were granted, they would supply conclusive proof of the *early* existence of the Levitical Code. That theory of religion however, which makes it a steady progress upwards, regards their spiritual tone as being the *crown* of that development and therefore of advanced, *i.e.*, late date. CHRONICLES We. delights to depreciate. The tradition of Sam.-Kings (which possesses historical value), "is clericalized in the taste of the post-exilic time, which had no feeling for anything but cultus and Torah, which accordingly treated as alien the old history, if it did not conform with its ideas and metamorphose itself into church history" (182). Are writing from the standpoint of the Priestly Code and writing to support it exactly one and the same? Assuredly the author of CHRONICLES, though confessedly late, may *confine* his attention to the *religious* history of Judah without incurring such reprobation. We. himself should certainly be the last to condemn history-writing under the influence of a theory!

The comparison rests therefore between the LAW and the PROPHETS. Contemporary with the history of KINGS are Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah; Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Jeremiah,—more especially the first four. Much controversy besets JOEL, dates as far apart as

IX and IV B.C. being assigned to it! This clearly demonstrates the insecurity attending inferences based only upon *internal* evidence and the argument *e silentio*. If the earliest of the Prophets (and there are weighty considerations in favour of the reign of Joash of Judah, a century before Amos) its testimony to the cultus form a strong argument against the late date of the Levitical Code (cf. Driver, 307ff). In their bearing on the question, Jeremiah and Exekiel are also suggestive, but they laboured *after* the discovery of Deut. in the Temple. The data for comparison are therefore three—The Law; Judges—Samuel—Kings; The four Earliest Prophets. Let it not be imagined however that the Historical books can be used freely and without hesitation. The keen eye of the critic distinguishes here also older and later elements. We. (228): "The earlier narrative has become clothed with minor and dependent additions. To vary the metaphor, the whole area of tradition has finally been uniformly covered with an alluvial deposit by which the configuration of the surface has been determined." Hence the critic's first task is to remove that alluvium! But it will be seen that to decide upon the character of *that* and to delimit it involves the crux of the whole matter. What test shall be employed to determine and remove that deposit? Certainly neither a vigorous imagination nor the exigencies of a theory.

NOTE XIV.—p. 44.

The following words of We. (30) are most significant: "Certainly the liberty to sacrifice everywhere seems to be somewhat restricted by the added clause, *in every place where I cause my name to be honoured*. But this means nothing more than that the spots, where intercourse between earth and heaven took place, were not willingly regarded as arbitrarily chosen, but, on the contrary were considered as having been somehow or other selected by the Deity Himself for His service." The cautious *somewhat* together with the dogmatism of the last sentence seems to conceal an effort to resist the conclusion that the Will of the DEITY did *somehow* impose such a limitation! Further, it is contended that Deut. iv. 41ff, xix. 1ff are an advance upon Exod. xxi. 12ff (W. R. S. 395, Deut. 231). The Asylum *Altar* of the latter has given place to the Asylum *Cities* of the former—"an accommodation to a later historical situation." That may be readily admitted, as such a change must have come in with the transition from the nomad camp-life to the settled conditions of national life in Canaan. More convenient and accessible centres would be an immediate necessity.

NOTE XV.—p. 46.

Driver in his *Introduction* (pp. 98-103) gives a long and suggestive list of expressions peculiar to Deut., which prove that "the strong and impressive individuality of the writer colours whatever he writes. In his command of a chaste yet warm and persuasive eloquence, he stands unique among the writers of the Old Testament." cf. Ryle in B.D. i. 599. Addis, *Documents of the Hexateuch*, vol. i., p. lxii.

NOTE XVI.—p. 54.

Driver says of the law of the Monarchy that "though the nucleus of the law may be ancient, in its present form it is doubtless designed as an attempt to check the moral and religious degeneracy which the monarchy, as a fact, too often displayed" (Deut., 210). We find the prophets credited with remarkable insight, even when inspiration is denied them. Could not that power enable Moses to forecast the course of Israel's history when settled as a nation? And would not the surrounding nations supply abundant intimations of the dangers to be apprehended?

NOTE XVII.—p. 54.

A further proof of the late date of Deut. is found in its references to idolatry—especially that of the "Host of Heaven" (iv. 19, xvii. 3). No reference is found to this in the historical books before the times of Ahaz and Manasseh (2 Kings xxiii. 12, xxi. 3f). It is supposed to be the result of contact with Assyria. The worship of the sun and moon was far more ancient, and found in Canaan. The Sun-god was revered in Egypt, and apparently under various names. May not the latter have suggested the necessary legislation? And may not contact with the Eastern power account for its adoption by the people, and the consequent reference to it in the later history?

NOTE XVIII.—p. 60.

The dynasty of the Exodus and that preceding it formed the most brilliant period of Egyptian civilization. "The Theban palace-temples unite a wealth of varied ornamentation almost unparalleled among the edifices erected by man." All the arts and luxuries of life made corresponding progress. Letters were cherished, and history, poetry, &c., reached considerable perfection. This was accompanied however by gross sensuality, cruelty, and barbarism. cf. Rawlinson, *Ancient Egypt*, 265ff.

NOTE XIX.—p. 61.

These "high places" were so called at first from their situation (1 Sam. ix. 13), but became afterwards simply places of worship. Many of these were associated with Patriarchal memories. The Canaanites however were wont to worship at such places, and herein lurked the danger of assimilation of their ideas and practices by the Israelites. The idea of Jehovah would thereby be degraded and His worship tainted by immoral practices (Ezek. xx. 27ff).

NOTE XX.—p. 63.

Torah, translated *law*, means direction or instruction, and is used technically of the authoritative direction given by the priests on matters of ceremonial observance. In a somewhat wider sense, Torah is then applied in Dt. to the exposition of the duties of the Israelites. Finally it was used still more generally as the name of the Pentateuch. Neh. viii. 1, 13, x. 35; 2 Chron. xxxi. 8; Deut. 208f.

NOTE XXI.—p. 67.

An interesting article was contributed by Delitzsh to the *Expositor*, 1886, on Dancing and Pentateuch Criticism in Co-relation, to show that the Mosaic Law "had not impoverished for the festivals the exuberant natural joy of former times, and that not everything holds water in the newest re-construction of the pre-Christian history of Israel."

NOTE XXII.—p. 81.

Prof. Robertson, in *Early Religion of Israel*, quotes Max Müller:—"It is true that oral tradition, before the invention of writing and printing, had proved itself a very safe guardian of poetry, and few would doubt that the earliest poetry which we know in India and Greece goes back at least to 1000 B.C. But it may go back, for all we know, to 2000 or 3000 B.C." The feats of Eastern memory clearly prove the *possibility* of very early composition.

NOTE XXIII.—p. 82.

Addis says (i. p. xv.): "Finally, the code which forms the central part of Dt. was given by Yahweh to Moses; and accordingly we read in Dt. xxxi. 9, that 'Moses wrote the words of this law, and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, . . . and to the elders.' Every seventh year, at the Feast of Tabernacles, this law was to be

read before the people. Here Moses is said to have written the Dt. Code, neither more nor less." This is clear also from xxix. 1. "It follows that a very small part of the Pent. claims to have been written by Moses." Still even *that* claim involves Mosaic legislation of comprehensive character (cf. Deut., p. 135f), and which is the keystone of the arch of criticism. It is true that We. claims (13) that *he* does not, "like Graf, so use this position (*i.e.*, Deut., as being of 621) as to make it the fulcrum for my lever." Yet the next words are "Dt. is the starting point!" Fix that and all else must follow suit.

NOTE XXIV.—p. 83.

An interesting illustration is found in Rom. xi. 2: "Or wot ye not what the scripture saith in Elijah?" (R. V. marg.). "The O. T. Scriptures were divided into paragraphs to which were given titles derived from their subject-matter; and these came to be very commonly used in quotations as references" (Sanday on Romans, 310). "In Elijah" therefore would designate the section in which this story was told, for division into chapters and verses was not yet. The step would be easy thence to popularly regarding the prophet as the author of the section (cf. Westcott on Hebrews, iv. 7).

NOTE XXV.—p. 84.

Ladd (*The Doctrine of Scripture*, i. 30): "Surely great care should always be given to the character of that inference, which connects any doubtful critical question with the religious doctrine of Christ. We cannot refuse the principle of accommodation a considerable applicability to the teachings of Christ. Such applicability is inseparably connected with His own human development and with the character of the circumstances in the midst of which He taught." Sanday (*Oracles*, 111 p.): "One hypothesis, however, I think we may reject beforehand. I should be loth to believe that our Lord accommodated His language to current notions, knowing them to be false. Though rich in knowledge, He divested Himself at least of such part of that knowledge as enabled Him to take a real humanity on the same footing with that of His fellow-men." One Psalm (cx.) seems to be clearly marked as Davidic by Christ. Swete on Mk. xii. 36, comments thus: "It cannot fairly be claimed that our Lord is committed by His hypothetical use of a current tradition to the Davidic authorship of the Psalter, or of the particular Psalm. . . . His whole argument rests on the hypothesis that the prevalent view was correct."

Gore (*Bampton Lect.*, p. 198) cites Matt. xii. 27; Mk. x. 18, as instances of a similar method of argumentation, in which Christ, without discussing or touching upon the soundness of their premisses, shows the fallacy and injustice of their own conclusions. "The question of authorship was immaterial to His purpose, says Neander (*Life of Christ*, p. 403); it was no part of His Divine calling to enter into such investigation. Here He doubtless employed the ordinary title of the Psalm—the one to which His hearers were accustomed." The mystery of the Person of the GOD-MAN—that unique mystery—is unfathomable from whichever side we approach THE MAN, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

NOTE XXVI.—p. 87.

Buhl (*Canon and Text of the O. T.*, p. 207) assigns the origin of the Hebrew vowel-pointing to VII or VIII A.D. "The Hebrew writing was at first, like its Semitic sisters, exclusively a consonantal writing, a sketch with the pen of the speech, familiarity with which as a living language, together with the connection of context, without difficulty contributed the colour, *i.e.*, the vowels." When Hebrew became a dead language, the need of vocalization became pressing. Still in the Synagogues the rolls are now unpointed.

NOTE XXVII.—p. 91.

Sayce speaks of the Hebrew literature as "the wrecks of a vast literature, which extended over the ancient world from a remote epoch" (24). It is therefore no isolated phenomenon, but history "based on literary records and not on the shifting evidence of fantasy and tradition." Scripture and the Inscriptions meet at certain points and corroborate each other. If therefore the Monuments be erected into tests of credibility, does not their agreement when contemporary records are extant, lead to the inference that Scripture may be reliable when not buttressed by such evidence? Why, moreover, should readier credence be accorded to the Monuments than to the religious writings of the Hebrews?

NOTE XXVIII.—p. 92.

In the Temple of Meneptah was found a large polished slab containing the inscription, one line of which is referred to on page 92—

" The Israelites are annihilated, no posterity is left unto them. . . ." This is the one reference to a *people* amid the names of countries or cities. Where was Israel then dwelling? Around that rages the discussion. If the order of citing the various countries be *geographical*, Israel must be in *Canaan*, and Meneptah is *not* the Pharaoh of the Exodus as the general opinion of scholars now tends (Sayce, 247f). If Israel be in *Egypt*, it may be a witness to the rigour of the oppression (Exod. i. 20ff). Naville regards it as the Egyptian way of recording the departure of Israel from Egypt. They were as if annihilated, and no longer of importance. Verily a convenient way of representing the disaster of Exod. xiv. 26ff!

Towards the close of the XVIII dynasty—200 years before Meneptah—Amenophis IV attempted to change the religion of Egypt. Thebes was then the capital, and failing to overcome the resistance to his new religion there, he founded a new capital in Middle Egypt, at Tel-el-Amarna, about 180 miles south of Cairo. Thither also he transferred the archives of his dynasty. With him however passed away the religion and the city. On its site in 1887 some 300 sun-baked Tablets were unearthed, containing correspondence between the Egyptian rulers and various Eastern Governors from Palestine to Babylonia. As this is in the Babylonian dialect, the culture of that land must have pervaded the Oriental world westward to Egypt. This necessarily demands a protracted period of training, and the Babylonian culture itself must be carried up to a very remote age. Briggs maintains that Hebrew, as a dialect of Canaan and related to the Babylonian, had a literary development before Abram first entered Canaan. Necessarily then great antiquity may be claimed for Hebrew literature.

This Egyptian discovery has again been supplemented by the excavations of Petrie and Bliss at Tel-el-Hesi in Palestine, in 1892. Digging down through layer after layer—buried city upon city—they reached the ancient Lachish, and found a Tablet similar in shape and character to those of Tel-el-Amarna.

The Moabite Stone, discovered by Klein in 1869, in the ruins of Dibon, has become a classic text of Old Test. history. It was erected by Mesha, King of Moab, to record his throwing off the yoke of Ahab in IX B.C. "This," says Driver (*Notes on Samuel*) "remarkably illustrates the Old Test."—both as to the relations of the kingdoms of Israel and Moab, and as to the Moabite religion. "The length and finished literary form of the Inscription show that the Moabites, in the X B.C., were not a nation that had recently emerged from barbarism." Its language differs less from the Hebrew than does one

dialect of English from another. This again pre-supposes past training of some length.

Finally, the Siloam Inscriptions dates not long after the Moabite Stone and affords hitherto the sole specimen of pure Biblical Hebrew. It was discovered in 1880 on the side of a long tunnel, which conveys a stream through the Temple Hill into the Pool of Siloam in the city. It gives account of its engineering, and tells how the excavators working from opposite ends were passing each other when they heard the sound of each other's tools. Isaiah viii. 6, referring to Ahaz, militates against identifying this with Hezekiah's work, 2 Kings xxvi. 20, 2 Chron. xxxii. 30. Consequently Sayce finds that no period after Solomon offers opportunity for such massive work.

NOTE XXIX.—p. 100.

In the new Oxford Edition of *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (1898), we find the following remark:—"In the whole series of the ancient Hebrew writings, as found in the Old Testament . . . the language remains, as regards its general character, . . . at about the same stage of development."

NOTE XXX.—p. 103.

G. A. Smith (*The Twelve Prophets*, i. 142): "And in all textual criticism we must keep in mind, that the obscurity of the present text of a verse, so far from being an adequate proof of its subsequent insertion, maybe the very token of its antiquity, scribes or translators of later date having been unable to understand it. To reject a verse only because *we* do not see the connection, would surely be as arbitrary, as the opposite habit of those, who, missing a connection, invent one, and then exhibit their artificial joint as evidence of the integrity of the whole passage. In fact we must avoid all headstrong surgery, for to a great extent we work in the dark." Which may be most admired—the apt description of much criticism, or the sanity of the rules here laid down?

NOTE XXXI.—p. 106.

Cheyne (J. R. L., p. 119): "So far as we can see, the forms most valued by the pious Jews of the period (*i.e.*, after the Exile), were the singing of praise, the recital of prayers, and fasting. Sabbath and Circumcision are nowhere mentioned in the Psalms." And yet the Psalms are post-exilic! Where is the Priestly Code now? The same

learned author makes the book of Ruth a post-exilic tale, written as a protest against the rigourism of Ezra in forbidding intermarriage with foreign women (p. 220) ! Ezra then, we may suspect, was not very successful. Nevertheless, he introduced such vast changes as the Priestly Code !

NOTE XXXII.—p. 113.

W. R. Smith (p. 66) places the real difference between the Hebrew religion and all others in "the personal character of Jehovah and in the relation corresponding to His character, which He seeks to maintain with His people. Properly speaking the heathen deities have no personal character, and no personal relations to their worshippers." Heathen religions were powerless to develop character, because god and people were ever on the same level. Not so Jehovah, who had "a purpose rising above the current ideas of His worshippers, and a will directed with steady consistency to a moral aim." And this held throughout the whole history of Israel. In truth, there seems to be something *specific* in the Hebrew religion.

NOTE XXXIII.—p. 122.

An interesting illustration of this method is found in Ramsay's *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 320f, when discussing the Rescript of Hadrian to Minucius Fundanus (124 A.D.). That rescript is found at the end of Justin's Apology (140 A.D.), and is mentioned in Melito's Apology (170 A.D.). Keim and others, finding this rescript in the way of their theories, pronounce it spurious in Justin, and cut it off. Then of course Justin does not refer to it ! Hence it is not genuine, and must have been forged in the interval between him and Melito. Thus Justin loses a chapter, and is afterwards used as an argument against Melito. "How easy it is on this principle to prove and date the forgery of every ancient document !"

NOTE XXXIV.—p. 141.

Jeroboam I, to establish his dynasty, sought to divert the people from religious pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Were they to repair to the house of the Lord there, the heart of the people might turn again to Rehoboam (1 Kings xii. 26ff). To neutralize any such tendency, he made the Calves. Bethel was an old sanctuary from Patriarchal times, and moreover lay on the road to Jerusalem, about four hours

distant. Whence was the *ritual* of these sanctuaries derived? The words of these four prophets seem to imply that it was derived from the Temple of Jerusalem. Such a step would be necessary too to wean the hearts of the people from the South. The priests were not of the "sons of Levi" (1 Kings xii. 31, xiii. 33), but possibly the priests of the *high places*, who would necessarily be antagonistic to Jerusalem, and would join interests with Jeroboam. Hos. x, 5, does not dignify these priests with the usual title (Kohanim), but (K'marim) those-who-prostrate-themselves. There underlies the actions of Jereboam, the presence and attractions of a Central Sanctuary—300 years before Josiah's great reformation!

NOTE XXXV.—p. 149.

W. R. Smith, p. 55: "The ordinary unenlightened Israelite thought that Jehovah was stronger than Chemosh, while the Moabite, as we see from the stone of Mesha, thought that Chemosh was stronger than Jehovah; but, apart from this difference, the two had a great many religious ideas in common, and, but for the continued word of revelation in the mouths of the prophets, Israel's religion might very well have permanently remained on this level, and so have perished with the fall of the Hebrew state."

NOTE XXXVI.—p. 151.

The allusions in these four prophets relate not only to historical events and characters, but also to religious festivals (Amos v. 21, viii. 10; Hos. ii. 11, ix. 4f) and customs (Amos ii. 11; Hos. ii. 11; Isa. i. 13). Further, the coincidences of language between the prophets and the Pent. are so pervasive and withal so striking, that the one must have influenced the other. And as Isaiah I. (i.-xxxix.), indicates acquaintance with the Law *more distinctly* than Isaiah II. (xl.-lxvi.), does not this present a strange feature, if the dates of both the Law and Isaiah II. were so near as they are sometimes represented? What suggestion of historical events lies in Jerem. xv. 1? cf. Psalm xcix. 6. The reasoning, which finds in the coincidences of language (when direct quotation was not yet) between the earliest Fathers of the Christian Church and the various New Testament writings proof of the existence of the latter, must also demand at the base of the prophetic writings some such histories as our Pentateuch.

NOTE XXXVII.—p. 156.

Max Müller (*Science of Language*, 2nd Series, Lect. ix.) dwells in eloquent terms on the marvellous versatility of the Greeks in poetry and prose, in arts and sciences, and expresses the obligations of our own century for "the rudiments of almost everything, with the exception of religion." "But the more we admire the native genius of Hellas, the more we feel surprised at the crudities and absurdities of what is handed down to us as their religion. . . . They believed in many gods, and ascribed to all of them, particularly to Jupiter, almost every vice and weakness that disgraces human nature" (p. 385). With the awakening of the moral consciousness, there comes a revolt against such a religion, and its days of influence over men are over. Now a difficulty presses here. The most brilliant nations have the worst religions, and the least brilliant the highest and best! The religion of Israel and all others around it are divided by all the extent of the simple word—ETHICS!

NOTE XXXVIII.—p. 160.

Mozley contrasts those gleams, which illumine the history of the Pagan world with Hebrew Prophecy. Some Pagan minds had prophetic visions. "But nothing came of this prophetic gleam; it founded nothing, it erected no institutions, no framework, no body, no Church. Prophecy thus under Paganism never grew into a practical and directing power. But as soon as prophecy found a receptacle in the chosen race, it grew strong, it became an architect and builder, it raised institutions, it enacted ordinances" (17f). In Israel it was not limited to age, or sex, or rank. The multitude and activity of prophets may also be inferred, seeing that, apart from the Canonical Prophets, 23 others are mentioned *by name*, and still further we meet with many nameless ones in O. T. history. It is supremely important to observe that the prophetic activity was always directed to the furtherance of morality and religion.

NOTE XXXIX.—p. 167.

Schultz (i. 242): "Clearly the object of their living together was to arouse, in a wider circle of gifted and sensitive youths, the enthusiasm that would make them prophets, living fountains of religious enthusiasm. In this enthusiasm for the religion and the statutes of Jehovah they must all have shared. . . . It is also quite natural to suppose

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that the arts of speaking and writing would be taught. . . . Under the dynasties of Ahab and Jehu they are seen to be the very heart and pith of the national theocratic party in the Northern Kingdom. When this Kingdom perished, they disappeared, or, at any rate, lost their importance."

NOTE XL.—p. 178.

W. E. Gladstone (*Good Words*, 1890, p. 391): "When we come to the Palestinian period, it would appear that the Israelites were subjected to a force and diversity of temptations, such as perhaps no people ever had to encounter. War stimulated their vindictive passions. Triumph everywhere waited on their arms. They were to esteem themselves the directly chosen ministers of God. They passed from a life, wandering, uncertain and ill-supplied, to settlement and abundance. The temples of seductive lust everywhere met their eyes, and the evil example, by which they were solicited in the mass and in detail, pretended to hallow itself by close association with religion. There is scarcely an evil passion that finds entrance into the human which was not powerfully stirred by the circumstances of the Israelitish conquest" (cf. Montefiore. 57ff. W. R. S. 37, 84, 171.)

NOTE XLI.—p. 214.

Legend, according to Schultz, has always a historical kernel, and is found in *prehistoric* days, when the nation depends on *oral* traditions. The persons dealt with are model-figures, ideal characters. The chief figures become typical, the accepted models of the nation's characters. "*Myths* are discovered rather than invented." They embody the earliest thoughts of men on the phenomena of nature. They lie beyond both history and legend. The contents of the early chapters of Genesis he calls "*Revelation myths*" (i. 19ff).

NOTE XLII.—p. 215.

Hilprecht (*Recent Researches in Bible Lands*, p. 9): "What then are our principal gains from Ægyptological research? In the foremost rank, we have the splendid vindication of the accuracy of the writer of the account of Israel's sojourn in Lower Egypt. What is said in Genesis and Exodus of the character of the country, its government and its court, and the customs of the people, are shown to be pictures

faithfully drawn from the life" (cf. Herzog, i. 709). The words of Niebuhr, in characterizing the sources of the Assyrio-Babylonian history he had written, are suggestive. "The Old Test. alone is an exception to patriotic untruth; it never conceals or passes over a national reverse or error. Its truthfulness is the highest thing in history, even for him who does not believe in divine inspiration. At the same time I must claim for the O. T. the minutest accuracy as well as the utmost truthfulness of *all* our sources of history."



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